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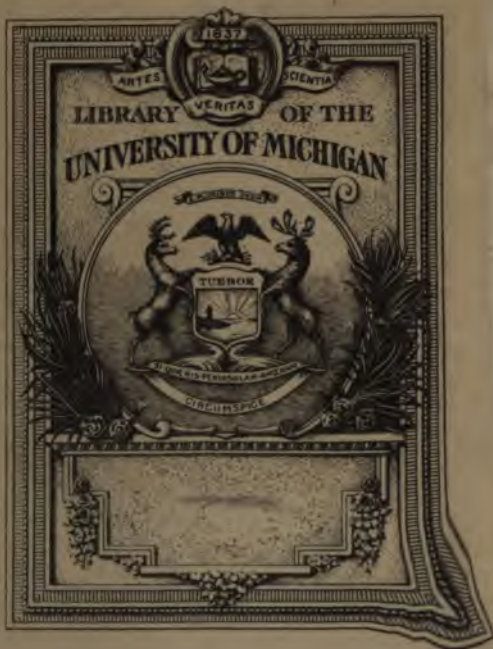
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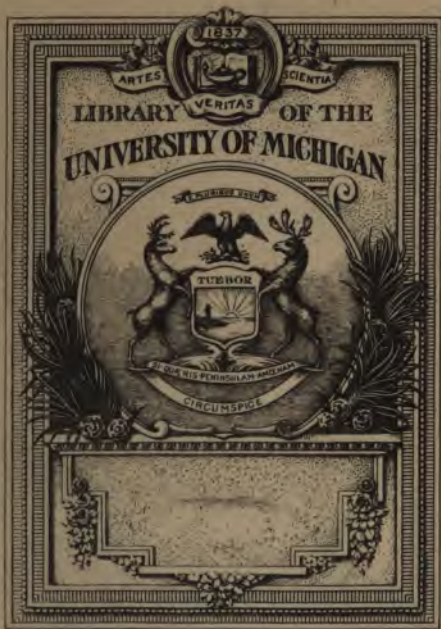
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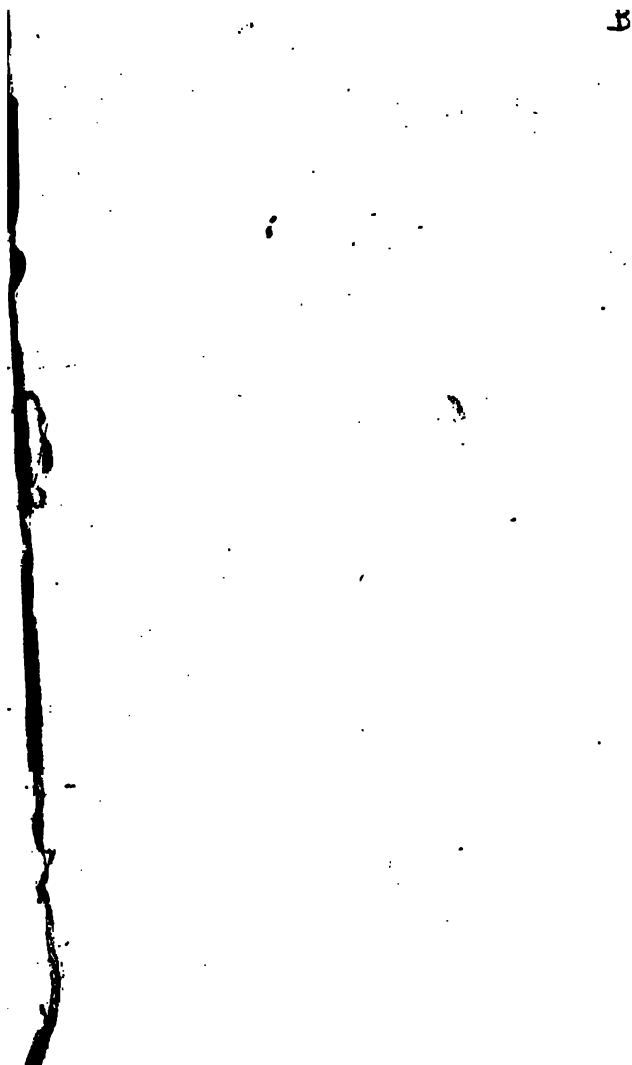
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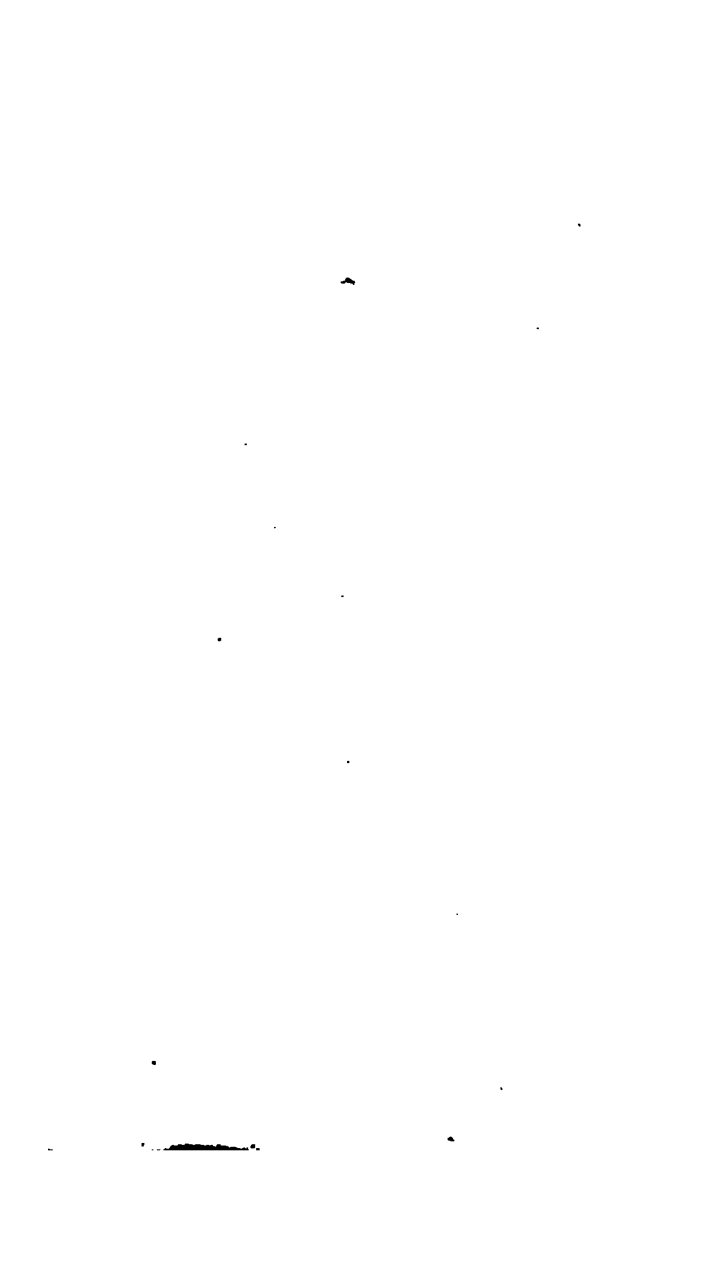
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THE
HEROINE,

OR
ADVENTURES

OF A
FAIR ROMANCE READER,

BY
EATON STANNARD BARRETT, ESQ.

“ L'Histoire d'une femme est toujours un Roman.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,
PUBLIC LIBRARY, CONDUIT-STREET, HANOVER-SQUARE,
AND SOLD BY GEORGE GOLDIE, EDINBURGH,
AND JOHN CUMMING, DUBLIN.

1813.

R. CLARKE, Printer, Well-street, London.

English
Blackwell
4-30-28
17064

THE HEROINE.

LETTER XXXIII.

YESTERDAY Lady Gwyn took me, at my particular request, to visit Monkton Castle, an old ruin, within three miles of us; and as it forms part of that property which she holds at present, it is mine to all intents and purposes.

The door-way was stopped up with stones, so that I could not take a survey of its interior; but outside it looked desolate enough. I mean, at some future period, to furnish it like *Udol-pho*, and other castles of romance, and

to reside there during the howling months.

After dinner her ladyship went to superintend the unpacking of some beautiful china, which had just arrived from London; and I was left alone on the sofa. Evening had already begun to close: a delicious indolence thrilled through my limbs, and I felt all that lassitude and vacuity which the want of incident ever creates.

“Were there even some youth in the house,” thought I, “who would conceive an unhappy attachment for me;—had her ladyship but a persecuting son, what scenes might happen! Suppose at this moment the door were to be thrown open, and he to enter, with a quick step, and booted and spurred. He starts on seeing me. Never had I *looked so lovely*. “Heavens!” *murmurs he, “’tis a divinity!”* then sud-

denly recollecting himself, he advances with a respectful bow. "Pardon this intrusion," says he; "but I—really I—". I rise, and colouring violently, mutter, without looking at him: "I wonder where her ladyship can be?" But as I am about to pass him, he snatches my hand, and leading me back to the sofa, says:—"Suffer me to detain you a moment. This occasion, so long desired, I cannot bring myself to relinquish. Prevented by the jealous care of a too fond mother, from appearing before you, I have sought and found a thousand opportunities, on the stairs—in the garden—in the shrubbery—to behold those charms. Fatal opportunities! for they have robbed me of my peace for ever! Yes, charming Cherubina, you have undone me. That airy, yet dignified form; those mild, yet *sparkling* eyes; those lips, more delici-

ous than the banquet of the gods—”

“ Really, Signor,” says I, in all the pleasing simplicity of maiden embarrassment, “ this language is as improper for me to hear as for you to express.” “ It is, it is improper,” cries he, with animation, “ for it is inadequate.” “ Yes,” says I, “ inadequate to the respect I deserve as the guest of your mother.”

“ Ah!” exclaims he, “ why should the guest imitate the harshness of the hostess?” “ That she may not,” says I, “ countenance the follies of the son. Signor, I desire you will unhand me.”

“ Never!” cries he; “ never, till you say you pity me. O, my Cherubina; O, my soul’s idol!” and he drops upon his knee, and grasps my hand; when behold, the door opens, and Lady Gwyn appears at it! Never were astonishment and dismay equal to her’s. “ Godfrey, Godfrey,” *says she*, “ is this the conduct that I

requested of you? This, to seek clandestine interviews, where I had prohibited even an open acquaintance? And for thee, fair unfortunate," turning towards me, with that mild look, which cuts more than a thousand sarcasms; "for thee, lovely frail one, thou must seek some other asylum." Her sweet eyes swim in tears. I fling myself at her feet. "I am innocent," I cry, "innocent as the little fawn that frisks itself to repose by the bubbling fountain." She smiles incredulous. "Come," says she, taking my hand, "let me lead you to your apartment." "Stay, in mercy stay!" cries Godfrey, rushing between us and the door. She waves him aside. I reach my room. Nothing can console me. I am all despair. In a few minutes the maid taps at my door, with a slip of paper from Godfrey. "Oh, Cherubina,"

it says, "how my heart is torn for you! As you value your fame, perhaps your life, meet me to-night, at twelve, in the shrubbery." After a long struggle, I resolve to meet him. 'Tis twelve, the winds are abroad, the shower descends. I fling on something, and steal into the shrubbery. I find him there before me. He thanks me ten thousand, thousand times for my kindness, my condescension; and by degrees, leads me into the avenue, where I see a chaise in waiting. I shrink back; he prays, implores; and at length, snatching me in his arms, is about to force me into the vehicle, when on a sudden—"Hold, villain!" cries a voice. It is the voice of Stuart! I shriek, and drop to the ground. The clashing of swords resounds over my contested body, and I faint. On *recovering*, I find myself in a small,

but decent chamber, with an old woman and a beautiful girl watching over me. "St. Catherine be praised," exclaims the young peasant, "she comes to herself." "Tell me," I cry, "is he murdered?" "The gentleman is dead, sure enough, miss," says the woman. I laugh frantic, and point my finger. "Ha! look yonder," I cry; "see his mangled corpse, mildly smiling, even in death. See, they fight; he falls.--- Barbarous Godfrey! valiant, generous, unfortunate Stuart! And hark, hear you that! 'Tis the bell tolling, tolling, tolling!" During six weeks I continue in this dreadful brain-fever. Slowly I recover. A low melancholy preys upon me, and I am in the last stage of a consumption. But though I lose my bloom, illness touches my features with something more than human. One evening, I had got my chair on

the green before the door, and was watching the sun as he set in a blaze of gold. "And oh!" exclaimed I, "soon must I set like thee, fair luminary;"—when I am interrupted by a stifled sigh, just behind me. I turn. Heaven and earth! who should be leaning over me, with looks of unutterable love, but—Stuart! In an instant, I see him, I shriek, I run, I leap into his arms.—

Unfortunate leap; for it wakened me from a delicious reverie, and I found myself in the arms,---not of Stuart,---but of the old butler! Down we both came, and broke in pieces a superb china vase, which he was just bringing into the room.

"What will my lady say to this?" cried he, rising and collecting the fragments.

"She will smile with ineffable

grace," answered I, "and make a moral reflection on the instability of sublunary things."

He shook his head, and went on with his work of affliction; while I hastened to the glass, where I found my face flushed from my reverie, my hair dishevelled, and my long eyelashes wet with tears. I perceived too that my dress had got a terrible rent by my fall.

Hardly had I recomposed myself, when her ladyship returned, and called for tea.

"How did you tear your robe, my love?" said she.

"By a fall that I got just now," replied I. "Sure never was such an unfortunate fall!"

"Nay, child," said she, rallying me, "though a martyr to the tender sensibilities, you must not be a victim to torn muslin."

“ I am extremely distressed, however,” said I.

“ But why so?” cried she. “ It was an accident, and all of us are awkward at times. Life has too many serious miseries to admit of vexation about trifles.”

“ There now!” cried I, with delight. “ I declare I told the butler, when I broke the china vase, that you would make a moral reflection.”

“ Broke the—Oh! mercy, have you broken my beautiful china vase?”

“ Smashed it to atoms,” answered I, in a tone of the most assuasive sweetness.

“ You did?” exclaimed she, in a voice that stunned me. “ And pray, how dared you go near it? How dared you even look at it? You, who are not fit company for crockery, much less china ;--a crazed creature, that I brought into my house to divert my

guests. You a title? You a beauty?" "Dear Lady Gwyn," said I, "do be calm under this calamity. Trust me life has too many serious miseries to admit of vexation about trifles."

Her ladyship rose, with her cheeks inflamed, and her eyes glittering.

I ran out of the room, in much terror; then up stairs, and into the nearest bed-chamber. It happened to be her ladyship's; and this circumstance struck me as most providential; for, in her present mood, she would probably compel me to quit the house; so that I could never have another opportunity of ransacking her caskets and cabinets, for memorials of my birth.

I therefore began the search; but in the midst of it was interrupted by hearing a small voice cry, "get out!"

Much amazed, I looked up, and

perceived her ladyship's favourite parrot in its cage.

“Get out!” said the parrot.

“I will let thee out, cost what it will,” cried I.

So with much sensibility, and indeed, very little spleen, I took the bird, and put it out at the window.

After having accurately examined several drawers, I found a casket in one of them; opened it, and beheld within (O delightful sight!) a miniature set round with inestimable diamonds, and bearing a perfect resemblance to the portrait in the gallery,—face, attitude, attire, every thing!

“Relic of my much injured house!” exclaimed I, depositing the picture in my bosom. “Image of my sainted mother, never will I part with thee!”

“What are you doing in my room?” cried Lady Gwyn, as she burst into

it. "How is this? All my dresses about the floor! my drawers, my casket open!—And, as I live, here is the miniature gone! Why you graceless little thing, are you robbing me?"

"Madam," answered I, "that miniature belongs to my family; I have recovered it at last; and let me see who will dare take it from me."

"You are more knave than fool," said her ladyship: "give it back this instant, or, on my honour, I will expose you to the servants."

"What is the use of bullying?" said I. "Sure you are ruined should this swindling affair come to be known, not that I would, for the world, hang your ladyship;—far from it;—but then your character will be blasted. Ah! Lady Gwyn, where is your hereditary honour? where is your prudence? where is your dignity?"

“Where is my parrot?” shrieked her ladyship.

“Ranging the radiant air!” exclaimed I—“inhaling life, and fragrance, and freedom amidst the clouds! I let it out at the window.”

Her ladyship ran towards me, but passed her, and made the best of my way down stairs; while she followed, calling, stop thief! Too well I knew and rued the dire expression; nor stopped an instant, but hurried out of the house—through the lawn—down the avenue—into a hay-field;—the servants in hot pursuit. Not a moment was to be lost: a drowning man, you know, will grasp at straws, and I crept for refuge under a heap of hay.

But whether they found me there, or how long I remained, or what has become of me since, or what is likely *to become of me hereafter*, you shall *learn in my next.* Adieu.

LETTER XXXIV.

I REMAINED in my disagreeable situation till night had closed, and the pursuit appeared over. I then rose, and walked through the fields, without any settled intention. Terror was now succeeded by bitter indignation at the conduct of Lady Gwyn, who had dared to drive me from my own house, and vilify me as a common thief. Insupportable insult! Unparalleled degradation! Was there no revenge? no remedy?

Like a rapid ray from heaven, a thought at once simple and magnificent shot through my brain, and made my very heart bound with transport. When I name Monkton Castle, need I tell you the rest? Need I tell you that

I determined to seize on that antique abode of my ancestors, to fortify it against assaults, to procure domestics and suitable furniture for it, and to reside there, the present rival, and the future victress of the vile Lady Gwyn? Let her dispossess me if she dare, or if she can; for I have heard that possession is a great number of points of the law in one's favour.

As to fitting up the castle, that will be quite an easy matter; for the tradespeople of London willingly give credit for any amount to a personage of rank like me; and therefore I have nothing more to do than make some friend there bespeak furniture in my name.

It appeared to me that Jerry Sullivan was the most eligible person I could select; so now, a light heart making a light foot, I tripped back to *the road*, and took my way towards

Monkton Castle, for the purpose of procuring an asylum in some cottage near it, and writing a letter of instructions to Jerry.

It was starlight, and I had walked almost three miles, when a little girl with a bundle of sticks on her back overtook me, and began asking alms. In the midst of her supplications, we came to the hut where she lived, and I followed her into it, with the hope of getting a night's lodging there, or at least a direction to one.

In a room, comfortless, with walls of smoked mud, I found a wrinkled and decrepit beldame, and two smutty children, holding their hands over a few faded embers. I begged permission to rest myself for a short time; the woman, after looking at me keenly, consented, and I sat down. I then entered into conversation, represented

myself as a wandering stranger in distress, and inquired if I had any chance of finding a lodging about the neighbourhood. The woman assured me that I had not, and on perceiving me much disconcerted at the disappointment, coarsely, but cordially, offered me her hut for the night. I saw I had nothing for it but to remain there; so the fire was replenished, some brown bread and sour milk (the last of their store) produced, and while we sat round it, I requested of the poor woman to let me know what had reduced her to such distress.

She told me, with many tears and episodes, that her daughter and son-in-law, who had supported her, died about a month ago, and left these children behind, without any means of subsistence, except what they could *procure* from the charitable.

All their appearances corroborated this account, for famine had set its meagre finger on their faces. I wished to pity them, but their whining, their dirtiness, and their vulgarity, disgusted more than interested me. I nauseated the brats, and abhorred the haggard hostess. How it happens, I know not, but the misery that looks alluring on paper is almost always repulsed in real life. I turn with distaste from a ragged beggar, or a decayed tradesman, while the recorded sorrows of a Belfield or a Rushbrook draw tears of pity from me as I read.

At length we began to think of rest. The children gave me their pallet: I threw myself upon it without undressing, and they slept on some straw with a blanket over them.

In the morning we presented a most dismal group. Not a morsel had we

for breakfast, nor the means of obtaining any. The poor cripple, who had expected some assistance from me, sat grunting in a corner; the children whimpered and shivered; and I, with more elegance, but not less misery, chaunted a matin to the Virgin.

I then began seriously to consider what mode of immediate subsistence I ought to adopt; and at last I hit upon a most pleasing and judicious plan. As some days must elapse between my writing to Jerry Sullivan and his coming down (for I mean to have him here, if possible), and as the cottage is within a short distance from the castle, I have resolved to remain with my hostess till he shall arrive, and to go forth every day in the character of a beggar-girl. Like another Rosa, I will earn my bread by asking alms. My *simple* and imploring address, my half-

suppressed sigh, my cheek yet traced with the recent tear, all will be irresistible. Even the shrivelled palm of age will expand at my supplication, and the youths, offering compliments with eleemosynary silver, will call me the lovely vagabond, or the medicant angel. Thus my few days of beggary will prove quite delightful ; and oh, how sweet, when those are over, to reward and patronize, as Lady of the Castle, those hospitable cottagers who have pitied and sheltered me as the beggar-girl.

My first step was writing to Jerry Sullivan ; and I fortunately found the stump of a pen, some thick ink, and coarse paper, in the cottage. This was my letter.

“ Honest Jerry,

“ Since I saw you last, I have established all my claims, and am now the Lady Cherubina de Willoughby, the true and illustrious mistress of Gwyn Castle, Monkton Castle, and other estates of uncommon extent and value. Now, Jerry, as I am convinced that you feel grateful for the services, however trivial, which I have done you, I know you will be happy at an opportunity of obliging me in return.

“ Will you then execute some commissions for me? Meaning to make Monkton Castle (which is uninhabited at present) my residence, I wish to furnish it according to the style of the times it was built in. You must, therefore, bespeak, at the best shops, such articles as I shall now enumerate.

“ *First.* Antique tapestry sufficient to furnish one entire wing.

“ Second. Painted glass enriched with armorial bearings.

“ Third. Pennons and flags, stained with the best old blood ;—Feudal if possible.

“ Fourth. Black feathers, and cloaks for my liveries.

“ Fifth. An old lute, or lyre, or harp.

“ Sixth. Black hangings, curtains, and a velvet pall.

“ Seventh. A warder’s trumpet.

“ Eighth. A bell for the portal.

“ Besides these, I shall want antique chairs, tables, beds, and, in a word, all the casts-off of castles that you can lay hands upon.

“ You must also get a handsome barouch, and four horses ; and by mentioning my name (the Lady Cherubina de Willoughby, of Monkton Castle), and by shewing this letter, no

shopkeeper or mechanic will refuse you credit for any thing. Tell them I will pass my receipts as soon as the several articles arrive.

“ I have now to make a proposal, which, I hope and trust, will meet with your approbation. Your present business does not appear to be prosperous: all the offices in my castle are still unoccupied, and as I have the highest opinion of your discretion and honesty, the situation of warden (a most ostensible one) is at your service. The salary is two hundred a-year: consider of it.

“ At all events, I do beseech of you to come down, as soon as you can, on receipt of this letter, and remain a few days, for the purpose of assisting me in my regulations.

“ You might travel in the barouch and bring some of the smaller artic

with you. Pray be here in three days at farthest.

“CHERUBINA DE WILLOUGHBY.

“*Monkton Castle.*”

I now began to think that I might, and should summon other friends, on this important occasion; and accordingly I wrote a few lines to Higginson.

“Dear Sir,

“Intending to take immediate possession of Monkton Castle, which has devolved to me by right of lineal descent; and wishing, in imitation of ancient times, for a wild and enthusiastic minstrel, as part of my household, I have to acquaint you, that if you should think such an office eligible, I shall be happy to place you in it, and to recompense your poetical ser-

vices with an annual stipend of two hundred pounds.

“ Should this proposal prove acceptable, be so good as to call on my trusty servant, Jerry Sullivan, in St. Giles’s, and accompany him down in my brouche.

“ CHERUBINA DE WILLOUGHBY.

“ *Monkton Castle.*”

I then penned a billet to Montmorenci; ah, ask not why, but pity me. Silly Cherubina! and yet, mark how her burning pen can write ice.

“ My Lord,

“ Pardon the trouble I am about giving you, but as I mean to reside, for the future, in one of my castles (my birth and pretensions having already been acknowledged by

plant every rankling pang, every bitter misery. Detestable passion ! which accomplishes the worst of purposes, through the medium of the best and sweetest affections. She whose innocent mind ascribes to others the motives that actuate itself, she who confides, because she would not deceive, she who has a tear for real grief, and who melts at the simulated miseries of her lover, she soonest falls a sacrifice to his arts ; while the cold vestal, who goes forth into the world callous to feeling, and armed with austerity, repulses his approaches with indignation, and calls her prudence virtue."

The young man gazed on me with surprise, and the mother had come closer ; but Susan was peeping at her face in the glass.

" Look on that beautiful girl before

you," cried I. "Heaven itself is not brighter than her brow; the tints of the morning cannot rival her blushes."

Susan held down her head, but cast an under glance at the 'squire.

"Such is she now," continued I, "but too soon you may behold her pale, shivering, unsteady of step, and hoarse with nocturnal curses, one of those unhappy thousands, who nightly strew our streets with the premature ruins of dilapidated beauty."

"Yes, look at her, look at her!" cried the mother, who flushing even through her wrinkles, and quivering in every limb, now rushed towards her daughter, and snatching off her cap, bared her forehead. "Look at her! she was once my lovely pride, the blessing of my heart; and see what he has now made her for me; while I, *miserable* as I am, must wink at her

Lady Gwyn), I wish to secure the parchment and picture that I left at my former lodgings at Drury Lane.

“ Will you, my lord, have the goodness to transmit them, by some trusty hand, to Jerry Sullivan, the woollen-draper in St. Giles’s, who will convey them to me at Monkton Castle.

“ With sentiments of respect and esteem,

“ I have the honour to be,

“ My Lord,

“ Your lordship’s most obedient,

“ And most humble servant,

“ CHERUBINA DE WILLOUGHBY.

“ *Monkton Castle.*”

Now this is precisely the formal sort of letter which a heroine sometimes indites to her lover: he cannot, for the soul of him, tell why; so down he comes, all distracted in a postchaise, and *makes* such a dishevelled entrance,

as melts her heart in an instant, and the scene ends with his arm round her waist. Adieu.

LETTER XXXV.

As I was now about to go begging, I thought it necessary to look like a beggar; so I dressed myself in a tattered gown, cap, and cloak, that had belonged to the deceased daughter of my hostess. Then placing my mother's portrait in my bosom, I sallied forth, and took the road to the neighbouring village.

Being Sunday, the rustics looked trim and festive, the nymphs and youths frolicked along, the grandsires sat at their doors, the sun was shining; all things smiled but the miserable *Cherubina*.

At length I reached the village, and deposited my letters for the post. The church, imbosomed in trees, stood at a little distance. The people were at prayers, and as I judged that they would soon be dismissed, I placed myself at the sacred gate, as an auspicious station for the commencement of my supplicatory career.

In a short time they began to leave the church.

“One penny for the poor starving girl,” said I.

“How are you? How are you? How are you?” was gabbled on all sides.

“One penny,—one penny,—Oh, one penny!” softly faltered I.

It was the cooing of a dove amidst the chattering of magpies.

“And who was that stranger in the next pew?” said one lady.

“ One penny for the love of —— ”

“ She seemed to think herself too pretty to pray,” said another.

“ One penny for the —— ”

“ Perhaps motion does not become her lips,” said another.

“ One penny for the love of charity.”

But they had gotten into their carriages.

“ If youth, innocence, and distress, can touch your hearts,” said I, following some gentlemen down the road, “ pity the destitute orphan, the hungry vagrant, the most injured and innocent of her sex. Gentlemen, good gentlemen, kind gentlemen — ”

“ Go to hell,” said they.

“ There is for you, sweetheart,” cried a coarse voice from behind, while a halfpenny jingled at my foot. I turned to thank my benefactor, and

found that he was a drunken man in the stocks.

Disgusted and indignant at the failure of my first attempt, I hurried out of the village, and strayed along, addressing all I met, but all appeared too gay to pity misery. Hour after hour I passed in fruitless efforts, now walking, now sitting; till at length day began to close, and fatigue and horrid hunger were enfeebling my limbs.

In a piteous condition, I determined to turn my steps back towards the cottage; for night was already blackening the blue hemisphere, the mountainous clouds hung low, and the winds piped the portentous moan of a coming hurricane. By the little light that still remained, I saw a long avenue on my left, which, I thought, might lead to some hospitable place of

shelter; and I began, as well as the gloom of the trees would permit, to grope my way through it.

After much labour and many falls, I came to an opening, and as I saw no house, I still walked straight forward. By this time the storm had burst upon my head with tremendous violence, and it was with difficulty that I could keep my feet.

At last I fancied I could perceive a building in front, and I bent my steps towards it. As I drew nearer, I found my way sometimes obstructed by heaps of stones, or broken columns, and I concluded that I was approaching some prodigious castle, where I should be sure to find shelter, horror, owls, and one of my near relations. I therefore hastened towards it, and soon my extended hands touched the structure. My heart struck a throb of joy,

and I began to feel along the wall for some ruined portal or archway.

Hardly had I moved ten paces, when my groping hands plunged into unresisting air: I stopped a moment, then entered through the vacuity, and to my great comfort, found myself under immediate shelter.

This then, I guessed, was the great hall of the castle, and I prepared my mind for the most terrible things.

I had not advanced three yards, when I paused in much terror; for I thought I heard a stir just beside me. Again all was still, and I ventured forward. I now fancied that I heard a gentle breathing; and at the same instant I struck my foot against something, which, with a sudden movement, tripped up my heels, and down I came, shrieking and begging for *mercy*; while a frightful bustle arose

all round me,—such passing and re-passing, rustling and rushing, that I gave myself over for lost.

“ Oh, gentlemen banditti !” cried I, “ spare my persecuted life, and I will never, never betray you !”

They did not answer a syllable, but retired to some distance, where they held a horrid silence.

In a few minutes, I heard steps outside, and two persons entered the building.

“ This shelters us well enough,” said one of them.

“ Curse on the storm,” cried the other, “ it will hinder any more of them from coming out to-night. However we have killed four already, and, please goodness, not one will be alive on the estate this day month.”

Oh, Biddy, how my soul sickened *at the shocking* reflection, that four of

a family were already murdered in cold blood, and that the rest were to share the same fate in a month!

Unable to contain myself, I muttered, "Mercy upon me, mercy upon me!"

"Did you hear that?" whispered one of the men.

"I did," said the other. "Off with us this moment!" and off they both ran.

I too determined to quit this nest of horrors, for my very life appeared in danger; so, rising, I began to grope my way towards the door, when I fell over something that lay on the ground, and as I put out my hand, I touched (Oh, horrible!) a dead, cold, damp human face. Instantly the thought struck me that this was one of the four whom the ruffians had murdered, and I flung myself from it, with a shiver of hor-

ror; but in doing so, laid my hand on another face; while a faint gleam of lightning that flashed at the moment shewed me two bodies, pale, ghastly, naked, and half covered with straw.


I started up, screaming, and made a desperate effort to reach the door; but just as I was darting out of it, I found my shoulder seized with a ferocious grasp.

"I have caught one of them," cried the person. "Fetch the lantern."

"I am innocent of the murder!" cried I. "I swear to you that I am. They did not fall by my dagger, I can assure you."

"Who? what murder?" cried he. "Hollo, help! here is a murder committed."

"Not by me!" cried I. "Not by me, not by me! No, no, no, my hands are unstained with their blood."



And now a lantern being brought, I perceived several servants in liveries, who first examined my features, and then dragged me back into the building, while they searched there for some poachers, whom they had been way-laying when they found me. The building! And what was the building, think you? Why nothing more than the shell of an unfinished house, —a mere modern morsel of a tasteless temple! And what were the banditti who had knocked me down, think you? Why nothing more than a few harmless sheep, that now lay huddled together in a corner! And what were the two corpses, think you? Why nothing more than two Heathen statues for the little temple!—And the ruffians that talked of their having killed, and having to kill, were only the *poachers*, who had killed four

hares! Here then was the whole mystery developed, and a great deal of good fright gone for nothing.

However, some trouble still remained to me. The servants, swearing that I was either concerned with the poachers, or in some murder, dragged me down a shrubbery, till we reached a large mansion. We then entered a lighted hall: one of them went to call his master, and after a few minutes, an elderly gentleman, with a troop of young men and women at his heels, came out of a parlour.

"Is that the murderess! What a young murderess! I never saw a murderess before!" was whispered about by the ladies.

"What murder is this you were talking of, young woman?" said the gentleman to me.

"I will tell you with pleasure,"

answered I. "You must know that I am a wandering beggar-girl, without home, parents, or friends; and when the storm began, I ran, for shelter, into the Temple of Taste, as your servants called it. So, thinking it a castle, and some sheep which threw me down, banditti, and a couple of statues, corpses, of course it was quite natural for me to suppose, when two men entered, and began to talk of having killed something, that they meant these very corpses. Was it not natural now? And so that is the plain and simple narrative of the whole affair."

To my great surprise, a general burst of laughter ran round the hall.

"Sheepbanditti, and statues corpses. Dear me,—Bless me—Well to be sure!" tittered the misses.

"Young woman," said the gentleman, "your incoherent account in-

clines me to think you concerned in some atrocious transaction, which I must make it my business to discover."

"I am sure," said a young lady, "she carries the gallows in her face."

"'Tis so pretty a gallows," said a young gentleman, "that I wish I were hanging upon it."

"Fie brother," said the young lady, "how can you talk so to a murderess?"

"And how can you talk so," cried I, "before you know me to be a murderess? It is not just, it is not generous, it is not feminine. Men impelled by love, may deprive our sex of virtue; but we ourselves, actuated by rancorous, not gentle impulses, rob each other of character."

"Oh! indeed, you have done for *yourself* now," said the young lady.

“ That sentence of morality has settled you completely.”

“ Then I presume you do not admire morality,” said I.

“ Not from the lips of a low wretch like you,” said she.

“ Know, young woman,” cried I, “ that the current which runs through these veins is registered in hereditary heraldry.”

The company gave a most disgusting laugh.

“ It is,” cried I, “ I tell you it is. I tell you I am of the blood noble.”

“ Oh blood !” squeaked a young gentleman.

What wonder that I forgot my prudence amidst these indignities ? Yes, the proud spirit of my ancestors swelled my heart, all my house stirred within me, and the blood of the De Willoughbys rose into my face, as I

drew the magnificent picture from my bosom, pointed a quivering finger at it, and exclaimed :

“ Behold the portrait of my titled mother !”

“ See, see !” cried the girls crowding round. “ ’Tis covered all over with diamonds !”

“ I flatter myself it is, “ said I. “ There is proof irrefragable for you !”

“ Proof enough to hang you I fancy !” cried the old gentleman, snatching it out of my hand. “ So now, my lady, you must march to the magistrate.” I wept, knelt, entreated, all was in vain : his son, the young man who had paid my face the compliment, took charge of my person, and accompanied by the servant who had seized me, set off with me to the magistrate’s.

During our walk, he tried to dis-

cover how I had got possession of the picture, but I was on my guard, and merely replied that time would tell my innocence. On a sudden, he desired the servant to go back for an umbrella, and take it to the magistrate's after him.

The man having left us:

"Now," said the 'squire, "whether you are a pilferer of pictures I know not, but this I know, that you are a pilferer of hearts, and that I am determined to keep you in close custody, till you return mine, which you have just stolen. To be plain, I will extricate you from your present difficulty, and conceal you in a cottage just at hand, if you will allow me to support and visit you. You understand me."

The blood gushed into my cheeks as he spoke; but however indignant I felt at the proposal, I likewise felt

that it would be prudent to dissemble; and as other heroines in similar predicaments do not hesitate to hint that they will compromise their honours, I too determined to give my tempter some hope; and thus make him my friend till I could extricate myself from this emergency.

I therefore replied that I trusted he would not find me deficient in gratitude.

“Thank you, love,” said he. “And now here is the cottage.”

He then tapped at a door: an elderly woman opened it, and within I perceived a young woman, with a bold, but handsome face, hastily adjusting her cap at a glass.

“I have brought a wretched creature,” said he, “whom I found starving on the road. Pray take care of her, and give her some refreshment.

You must also contrive a bed for her."

The women looked earnestly at me, and then significantly at each other.

"She shall have no bed in my house," said the elder, "for I warrant this is the hussey who has been setting you against poor susan, in order to get you herself, and telling you lies about Tommy Hicks's visiting here—poor girl!"

"Ay, and Bob Saunders," cried the daughter.

"Sweet innocent!" cried the mother. "And the three Hawkins's," cried the daughter.

"Tender lamb!" cried the mother, "and a girl too that never looked at mortal man but the 'squire."

"And John Mullins, and Jacob Jones, and Patrick O'Brien," cried *the daughter*.

“ Think of that ! ” cried the mother.

“ Yes, think of that ! ” cried the daughter. “ Patrick O’Brian ! the broad-shouldered abominable man ! Oh ! I will cut my throat—I will—so I will ! ”

“ Alas ! ” said I, “ behold the fatal effects of licentious love. Here is a girl, whom your money, perhaps, allured from the paths of virtue.”

“ Oh ! no,” cried Susan, “ it was his honour’s handsome face, and his fine words, so bleeding and so sore, and he called me an angel above the heavens ! ”

“ Yes,” said I, “ it is the tenderness of youth, the smile of joy, the blush of innocence, which kindle the flame of the seducer ; and yet these are what he would destroy. It is the heart of sensibility which he would *engage*, and yet in that heart he would

guilt, that I may save her from disgrace and ruin !”

“ Oh ! then,” cried I, turning to the ’squire, “ while still some portion of her fame remains, fly from her, fly for ever !”

“ I certainly mean to do so,” replied he, “ so pray make your mind easy. You see, Susan, by this young woman’s sentiments, that she cannot be what you suspected her.”

“ And I am convinced, Susan,” said I, “ that you feel grateful for the pains I have taken to reclaim the ’squire from a connection so fatal to you both.”

“ I am quite sure I do,” sobbed Susan, “ and I will pray for your health and happiness ever while I live. So, dear Miss, since I must lose him, I hope you will coax him to leave me some money first ; not that I ever

valued him for his money, but you know I could not see my mother go without her tea o' nights."

"Amiable creature!" cried I. "Yes, I will intercede for you."

"My giving you money," said the 'squire, "will depend on my finding, when I return to-morrow morning, that you have treated this girl well to-night."

"I will treat her like a sister," said Susan.

The 'squire now declared that he must be gone; then taking me aside, "I shall see you early to-morrow," whispered he, "and remove you to a house about a mile hence, and I will tell my father that you ran away. Meantime, continue to talk virtue, and these people will think you a saint."

He then bade us all good night, and departed.

Instantly I set my wits at work, and soon hit upon a plan to accomplish my escape. I told the women that I had an old mother, about a mile from the cottage, who was almost starving ; and that if I could procure a little silver, and a loaf of bread, I would run to her hut with the relief, and return immediately.

To describe the kind solicitude, the sweet goodnature that mother and daughter manifested, in loading me with victuals and money, were impossible. Suffice it, that they gave me half-a-crown, some bread, tea, and sugar ; and Susan herself offered to carry them ; but this I declined ; and now, with a secret sigh at the probability that I might never see them again, I left their house, and hastened towards the cottage of the poor woman. Having reached it, I made

the hungry inhabitants happy once more, while I solaced myself with some tea, and the pleasing reflection, that I had brought comfort to the distressed, and had reclaimed a deluded girl from ruin and infamy.

Adieu.

LETTER XXXVI.

AFTER my last letter, I spent two tedious days in employments that I now blush to relate;—no less than doing all the dirty work of the cottage, such as sweeping the room, kindling the fire, cooking the victuals; and trying, by dint of comb and soap, to make cherubs of the children. What bewitched me, I cannot conceive, for the humanity of other heroines is *ever clean, elegant, and fit for the reader.*

They give silver and tears in abundance, but they never descend to the bodily charity of working, like wire-drawers, for withered old women and brats with rosy noses. I can only say, in vindication of myself, that those who sheltered me were poor and helpless themselves, and that they deserved some recompense on my part for their hospitality to me. So you must not condemn me totally; for I do declare to you, that I would much rather have relieved them with my purse, and soothed them with my sympathy, than have fried their herrings and washed their faces.

At the same time, take notice, I was not totally forgetful of my nobler destiny; for I dedicated part of this period to the composition of a poem, which I reserve for my memoirs. My *biographer* can say that it was suggest-

ed by the story of Susan; and even if it should still appear to be somewhat forced into my book, I would rather have this the case, than suffer posterity to go without it altogether. Here it is.

CAROLINE.

Beneath a thatch, where gadding woodbine
flower'd,

About the lattice and the porch embower'd,

An aged widow liv'd, whose calm decline,

Clung on one hope, her lovely Caroline.

Her lovely Caroline, in virtue blest,

As morning snow, was spotless and unprest.

Her tresses unadorn'd a braid controll'd,

Her pastoral russet knew no civic gold.

In either cheek an eddying dimple play'd,

And blushes flitted with a rosy shade.

Her airy step seem'd lighting from the sky;

And joy and frolic sparkled in her eye.

Yet would she weep at sorrows not her own,

And love foredoom'd her heart his panting
throße.

*For her the rustics strove a homely grace,
Clipped their redundant locks, and smooth'd
their pace;*

Lurk'd near her custom'd path, in trimmest
guise,

And talk'd the simple praises of her eyes.

But fatal hour, when she, by swains unmov'd,
Beheld the master of the vale, and loved.

Long had he tempted her reserve in vain,
Till one luxuriant eve that sunn'd the plain ;
On the bent herbage, where a gushing brook,
Blue harebells and the tufted violet shook ;
Where hung umbrageous branches overhead,
And the rain'd roses lay in fragments red,
He found the slumbering maid. Prophane he
press'd

Her virgin lip, then first by man carest.
She starts, and like a ruddy cloud bestrewn,
At brake of morning, o'er the paly moon ;
Or as on Alpine cliffs, a wounded doe
Sheds all its purple life upon the snow ;
So the maid blushes, while her humble eyes
Fear from a knot of primroses to rise ;
And mute she sits, affecting to repair
The discomposed meanders of her hair.

Need I his arts unfold ? The accomplish'd guile
That glosses poisonous words with gilded smile ?
The tear suborned, the tongue complete to please ;
Eyes extorted, idolatry of knees ?

These and his oaths I pass. Enough to tell,
The virgin listen'd, and believ'd, and fell.

And now from home maternal long decoy'd
She dwells with him midst pleasures unenjoy'd;
Till the sad tidings that her parent dear
To grief had died a victim reach her ear.
Pale with despair, "At least, at least," she
cries,

"Stretch'd on her ashes, let me close these eyes.
Short shelter need the village now bestow,
Ere by her sacred grave they lay me low."

Then, without nurture or repose, she hastes
Her journey homeward over rocks and wastes;
Till, as her steps a hill familiar gain,
Bursts on her filling eyes her native plain.
She pants, expands her arms, "Ah, peaceful
scene!"

Exclaiming: "Ah, dear valley, lovely green,
Still ye remain the same; your hawthorn still,
All your white cottages, the little mill;
Its osiered brook, that prattles thro' the meads,
The plat where oft I danced to piping reeds.
All, all remain unalter'd. 'Tis but thine
To suffer change, weak, wicked Caroline!"

The setting sun now purples hill and lake,
And lengthen'd shadows shadows overtake.

A parting carol larks and throstles sing,
The swains aside their heated sickles fling.
Now dairies all arrang'd, the nymphs renew
The straggling tress, and tighten'd aprons blue;
And fix some hasty floweret, as they run
In a blithe tumult to the pipe begun.
And now, while dance and frolic shake the vale,
Sudden the panting girl, dishevell'd, pale,
Stands in the midst. All pausing gather round,
And gaze amaz'd. The tabors cease to sound.

“ Yes, ye may well,” the faltering suppliant
cries,
“ Well may ye frown with those repulsive
eyes.


Yet pity one not vicious but deceiv'd,
Who vows of marriage, ere she fell, believ'd.
Without a mother, sire, or fostering home,
Save, save me, leave me not forlorn to roam.
Not now the gifts ye once so fondly gave,
Not now the verse and rural wreath I crave;
Not now to lead your festive sports along,
Queen of the dance, and despot of the song;
One shed is all, oh, just one wretched shed,
To lay my weary limbs and aching head.
Then will I bless your bounty, then inure
My frame to toil, and earn a pittance poor.

Then, while ye mix in mirth, will I, forlorn,
Beside my murder'd parent sit and mourn."

She paus'd, expecting answer. None replied.
"And have ye children, have ye hearts?" she
cried.

"Save me now, mothers, as from future
harms

Ye hope to save the babies in your arms!
See, to you, maids, I bend on abject knee;
Youths, even to you, who bent before to me.
O, my companions, by our happy plays,
By dear remembrance of departed days;
By pity's self, your cruel parents move;
By sacred friendship; Oh! by those ye love!
Oft when ye trespassed, I for pardon pray'd;
Oft on myself your little mischiefs laid.
Did I not always sooth the wounded mind?
Was I not call'd the generous and the kind?
Still silent? What! no word, no look to cheer?
No gentle gesture? What, not even a tear?
Go then, ye pure! to heights of virtue climb;
Let none plead for me, none forgive my crime.
Go—yet the culprit, by her God forgiven,
May plead for you before the throne of heaven!
Ye simple pleasures of my rural hours,
Ye skies all sunshine, and ye paths all flowers;



Home, where no more a soothing friend I see,
Dear happy home, a last farewell to thee !”

Claspt are her hands, her features strewn
with hair,

And her eyes sparkle with a keen despair.

But as she turns, a sudden burst of tears,
And struggles, as of one withheld, she hears.

“ Speak !” she conjures, “ ere yet to phrenzy
driven,

Tell me who weeps ? What angel sent from
Heaven ?”

“ I, I your friend !” exclaims, with panting
charms,

A rosy girl, and darts into her arms.

“ What ! will you leave me ? Me, your other
heart,

Your favourite Ellen ? No, we must not part ;

No, never ! come, and in our cottage live ;

Come, for the cruel village shall forgive.

O, my own darling, come, and unprov’d,

Here on this heart rest ever, ever lov’d ;

Here on this constant heart !” While thus she
spoke,

Her furious sire the linkt embraces broke.

Borne in his arms, she wept, entreated, rav’d ;

Then fainted, as a mute farewell she wav’d.

But now the wretch, with low and wilder'd
cries,

Round and around revolving vacant eyes :
Slow from the green departs, and pauses now,
And gnaws her tresses and contracts her brow.
Shock'd by the change, the matrons, stern no
more,

Pursue her steps and her return implore :
Soon a poor maniac, innocent of ill,
She wanders unconfined, and drinks the rill,
And plucks the simple cress. A hovel near
Her native vale defends her from the year.
With tender feet to flint and thistle bare,
And 'faded willows weeping in her hair,
She climbs some rock at morn, and all alone,
Chaunts hasty snatches of harmonious moan.
When moons empearl the leafy locks of bowers,
With liquid grain, and light the glistening flowers,
She gathers honeysuckle down the dells,
And tangled eglantine, and slumbering bells ;
And with moist finger, painted by the leaves,
A coronet of roses interweaves ;
Then steals unheard, and gliding thro' the yews,
The odorous offering on her mother strews.
At morn with tender pause, the nymphs admire,
How recent chaplets still the grave attire ;

And matrons nightly tell, how fairies seen,
Danc'd roundelays aslant its cowslipped green.
Even when the whiten'd vale is bleak with snows,
That verdant spot the little Robin knows ;
And sure to find the flakes at dawn remov'd,
Alights and chirps upon its turf belov'd.

Such her employ ; till now, one wintry day,
Some shepherds hurrying by the haunted clay,
Find the pale ruin, life for ever flown,
With her cheek pillow'd on its dripping stone.
The turf unfinish'd wreaths of ivy strew,
And her lank locks are dim with misty dew.
Poor Ellen hymns her requiem. Willows pine
Around her grave. Fallen, fallen Caroline !

This morning, having resumed my muslins, I repaired to my castle, and seated on the stump of a withered oak, began an accurate survey of its strength, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it could stand a siege, in case Lady Gwyn should attempt to dispossess me of it. I must now describe it to you.

It is situated about a quarter of a mile from the road, on a waste tract of land, where a few decayed trunks of trees are all that remain of a former forest. The castle itself, which I fear is rather too small for long corridors and suites of apartments, forms a square, with a turret at each corner, and with a large gateway, now stopped up with stones, at the southern side. While I surveyed its roofless walls, overtopped with briony, grass, and nettles, and admired the gothic points of the windows, where mantling ivy had supplied the place of glass, long suffering and murder came to my thoughts.

As I sat planning, from romances, the revival of the feudal customs and manners in my castle, and of the feudal system among my tenantry (all so favourable to heroines), I saw a magnifi-

cent barouche, turning from the road into the common, and advancing towards me. My heart beat high: the carriage approached, stopt; and who should alight from it, but Higginson and Jerry!

After Higginson, with reverence, and Jerry, with familiarity, had congratulated me on my good fortune, the latter looked hard at the castle.

"The people told us that this was Monkton Castle," said he; "but where is the Monkton Castle that your ladyship is to live in?"

"There it is, my friend," answered I.

"What? there!" cried he.

"Yes, there," said I.

"What, there, there!"

"Yes, there, there."

"Oh! murder! murder!"

"How far are we from your lady-

ship's house?" said the postilion, advancing with his hat off.

"This castle is my house," answered I.


"Begging your ladyship's pardon," said he; "what I mean, is, how far are we from where your ladyship lives?"

"I live in this castle," answered I.

Jerry began making signs to me over the fellow's shoulder, to hold my tongue.

"What are you grimacing about there, Mr. Sullivan?" said I.

"Nothing at all, Ma'am," answered he. "'Tis a way I have got; but your ladyship, you know, is only come down to this castle on a sort of a country excursion, to see if it wants repairing, you know: you don't mean to live in it, you know." And he put his finger on his nose, and winked at me.



“ But I know I do mean to live in it,” cried I, “ and so I request you will cease your grinning.”

“ Oh, murder, murder!” muttered he, swinging round on his heel.

The postilion now stood staring at the venerable edifice, with an expression of the most insolent ridicule.

“ And what are *you* looking at?” cried Jerry.

“ At the sky through the castle window,” said the fellow, reddening, and shaking with smothered laughter.

“ Why then mind your own business,” cried Jerry, “ and that is, to take the horses from the carriage, and set off with yourself as fast as you can.”

“ Not till I am paid for their journey down,” said the postilion. “ So will *your ladyship* have the goodness to pay me ?”

“Certainly,” said I. “Jerry, pay the fellow.”

“Deuce a rap have I,” answered Jerry. “I laid out my last farthing in little things for your ladyship.”

“Higginson,” said I, “shall I trouble you to pay him.”

“It irks me to declare,” answered Higginson, “that in equipments for this expedition;—a nice little desk, a nice little comb, a nice little pocket-glass, a nice little ——”

“In short you have no money,” cried I.

“Not a farthing,” answered he.

“Neither have I,” said I; “so, postilion, you must call another time.”

“Here is a pretty to do!” cried the postilion. “Damme, this is a shy sort of a business. Not even the price of a feed of oats! Snuff my eyes, I must have *the money*. I must, blow me.”

“’Tis I that will blow you,” cried

Jerry, "if you don't unloose your horses this moment, and pack off."

The postilion took them from the carriage, in silence; then having mounted one of them, and ridden a few paces from us, he stopped.

"Now you set of vagabonds and swindlers," cried he, "without a roof over your heads, or a penny in your pockets, to go diddle an honest man out of his day's labour; wait till master takes you in hand: and if I don't tell the coachmaker what a blockhead he was to give you his barouche on tick, may I be particularly horsewhipt! Ladyship! a rummish sort of a tit for a Ladyship! And that is my Lord, I suppose. And this is the Marquis. Three pickpockets from Fleet-street, I would bet a whip to a wisp. Ladyship! Oh, her Ladyship!" and away *he cantered, ladyshipping it, till he was out of hearing.*

“ That young person deserves a moral lecture,” said Higginson.

“ He deserves a confounded drubbing.” cried Jerry. “ But now, ’pon your conscience, does your ladyship intend to live in this old castle ?”

“ Upon my honour I do,” replied I.

“ And is there no decent house on the estate, that one of your tenants could lend you ?” said he.

“ Why you must know,” replied I, “ that though Lady Gwyn, the person who has withheld my property from me so long, acknowledged my right to it but a few days since, still, as she has not yet yielded up the title deeds, in consequence of a quarrel which obliged me to quit her house, it is improbable that the tenantry would treat me as their mistress. All I can do, is, to seize this uninhabited castle which lies *on my own estate.* But I can tell you, *that a heroine of good taste, and who*

wishes to rise in her profession, would infinitely prefer the desolation of a castle to the comforts of a villa."

"Well, of all the wise freaks---" cried Jerry, standing astride, sticking his hands in his ribs, and nodding his head, as he looked up at the castle.

"I tell you what, Mr. Sullivan," interrupted I, "if you have the slightest objection to remaining here, you are at perfect liberty to depart this moment."

"And do you think I would leave you?" cried he. "Oh then, oh then, 'tis I that wouldn't! And the worse your quandary, the more I would stick by you;---that is Jerry Sullivan. And if it was a gallows itself you were speculating in, I would assist you all the same. One can find friends enough when one is in the right, but give me the fellow that would fight for me right or wrong."

I shook his honest hand with warmth, and then asked him if he had performed my commissions.

“Your ladyship shall hear,” said he. “As soon as I got your letter, I went with it in my hand, and shewed it at fifty different shops;—clothiers, and glaziers, and upholsterers, and feather-makers, and trumpet-makers; but neither old tapestry, nor old painted glass, nor old flags stained with old blood, nor old lutes, nor old any thing that you wanted, could I get; and what I could get, I must pay for; and so what I must pay for, I would not get; and the reason why, I had no money; and moreover, as sure as ever I shewed them your letter, so sure they laughed at it.”

“Laughed at it!” cried I.

“All but one,” said Jerry.

“And he?” cried I.

“Was going to knock me down,”

answered Jerry. "So, as I did not wish to come without bringing something or other to you, and as you commanded me to get every thing old; egad, I have brought three whole pieces of damaged black cloth out of our own shop, that I thought might answer for the hangings and curtains; and I bought a parcel of old funeral feathers and an old pall, from an undertaker; and I bought an old harp with five strings, that will do any thing but play; and I stole our own parlour bell; and I borrowed a horn from the guard of a mail-coach, which I hope will do for a trumpet; and now here they are all in the barouche, and my bed and trunk; and a box of Mr. Higginson's."

"But the barouche?" said I; "how did you get that?"

"By not shewing your letter," answered Jerry; "and besides, the coach-

maker knew me ; and I told him it was for my Lady De Willoughby, as beautiful as an angel—but he did not mind that—and as rich as a Jew;—but he minded that ; and so he gave me the barouche, and a shakehands into the bargain.”

“ Well, my friend,” said I, “ you did your best ; so as soon as I can raise a sufficient sum, I will furnish my castle in a style of gothic grandeur, which your modern painters and glaziers have no notion of. Meantime, if you and Higginson will pull down those stones that choak the gateway, we will enter the building, and see what can be done with our present materials.”

They commenced operations with such alacrity, that they soon cleared away the rubbish, and in we went. Not a sign of a roof on the whole edifice : the venerable verdure of damp stained

the walls, nettles, and thistles clothed the ground, and three of the turrets, inaccessible to human feet, were to be come at only by an owl or an angel. However, on examining the fourth, or eastern turret, I found it in somewhat better condition than the rest. A half-decayed ladder, leaning against an aperture in the ceiling above, tempted me to mount, and I got into a room of about eight feet square (the breadth of the turret), overrun with moss and groundsel, and having a small window in one of its sides. From the floor, another ladder reached to another aperture in the ceiling above; and on ascending it, I found myself at the top of the tower, round which ran a broken parapet. This tower, therefore, I determined to fit up and inhabit; and to leave the other three in a state of classical dilapidation, as receptacles for

strange noises, horrid sights, and nocturnal Condottieri.

I then descended, and made the minstrel and warden (for they have consented to undertake these offices) draw the barouche within the gateway, and convey the luggage up to the room that I meant for my residence.

The next matter that we set about was hanging the chamber with the black cloth; and this we contrived to do by means of wooden pegs, which the warden cut with his knife, and drove, with a stone, through the drapery, into the crevices of the walls. We found two of the three pieces of black cloth sufficient to cover the sides of the room; and when the hangings were all arranged, I gazed on their sombrous and antique effect with the most heartfelt transport. I then named it *the BLACK CHAMBER*, and gave orders *that it should always be called so.*

Our next object was to contrive a bed for me. Jerry, therefore, procured some branches of trees, and after much labour, and with no small ingenuity, constructed a bedstead, as crazy as any that ever creaked under a heroine. We then hung it round with curtains, of black cloth; and Jerry's own bed being placed upon it, we spread the black pall over that. Never was there a more funereal piece of furniture; and I saw, with pride, that it rivalled the famous bed in the *Mysteries of Udolpho*.

The minstrel all this time appeared stupified with astonishment, but worked like a horse, puffing and panting, and doing every thing that he was desired, without uttering a word.

Dinner now became our consideration, and I have just dispatched the warden (like Peter, in the *Romance of the Forest*) to procure provisions. Not

a farthing has he to purchase any, since even the half-crown which Susan gave me is already exhausted.

But the light that enters at my window begins to grow grey, and an appropriate gloom thickens through the chamber. The minstrel stands in a corner, muttering poetry; while I write with his pen and ink on a stool that the warden made for me. My knees are my desk.

Adieu.

LETTER XXXVII.

Just at the close of evening, Jerry came running towards the castle with a milk-pail on his head.

“ See,” cried he, “ putting it down, “ how nicely I have choused a little *milk-maid* ! There was she, tripping

along as tight as her garter. “Fly for your life,” cries I, striding up to her: “there is the big bull at my heels that has just killed two children, two sucking pigs, two——Here! here! let me hold your pail for you!” and I whips it off her head. So, what does she do, but she runs off without it one way; and what does I do, but I runs off with it another way. And besides this, I have got my hat filled with young potatoes, and my pockets stuffed with ears of wheat; and if we can’t eat a hearty dinner of these dainties, why that our next may be fried fleas and toasted leather!”

Though I was angry at the means used by Jerry to get the provisions, yet, as dinner just then had more charms for me than moral sentiment, instead of instructing him in the lofty *doctrines* of the social compact, I bade

him pound the grains of wheat between two flat stones. In the mean time, I sent the minstrel to the cottage for a light and some fuel; and on his return, made him stop up the window with grass and fern. He then kindled a fire of wood in the centre of the Black Chamber; for, as the floor was of stone, it ran no risk of being burned.

This done, I mixed some milk with the bruised wheat, kneaded a cake, and laid it on the red embers, while Jerry took charge of roasting the potatoes.

As soon as our romantic repast was ready, I drew my stool to the fire: my household sat on large stones, and we made a tolerable meal, they on the potatoes, and I on the cake, which hunger had really rendered palatable.

The warden lifted the pail to my lips, and I took a draught of the rural *nectar*; while the minstrel remarked,

at Nestor himself had not a larger
plet.

I now paid the poor cottagers a visit,
I carried the fragments of our dinner
them.

On my return, we resumed our
its, and hung over the decayed em-
ers, that cast a gloomy glare upon the
d and the drapery; while now and
en, a flash from the ashes, as they
rk, shot a reddened light on the pale-
ss of the minstrel, and brightened
e broad features of the warden. The
nd had risen: there was a good deal
excellent howling round the turret:
e sat silent, and looking for likenesses
the fire.

“Come, warden,” cried I, “repair
ese embers with a fresh splinter, and
t me hear the memoirs of your life.”

The warden consented, the fire was
plenished, and he thus began :

“Once upon a time when pigs were swine—”

“I will trouble you for a more respectable beginning,” said I; “some striking, genteel little picture, to bespeak attention,—such as, “All was dark ;” or, “It was on a gloomy night in the month of November.”

“That would be the devil’s own lie,” cried Jerry, “because I was born in January ; and by the same token, I was one of the youngest children that ever was born, for I saw light five months after my mother’s marriage. Well, being born, up I grew, and the first word I said was mammy ; and my hair was quite yellow at first, though ’tis so brown now ; and I promised to be handsome, but the symptom soon left me ; and I remember I was as proud as Lucifer when I got trowsers ; *and——*”

“ Why now, Jerry, what sort of trash is this ?” said I. “ Fie ; a warden like you ! I hoped to have heard something of interest and adventure from you ; that your family was respectable, though poor—”

“ Respectable !” cried Jerry. “ Why, I am of the O’Sullivans, who were kings of Ireland, and that is the very reason I have not Mister to my name, seeing as how I am of the blood royal. Oh, if ’tis the wonderful your ladyship wants, by the powers, I am at home thereabouts. Well, I was iddicated in great tenderness and ingenuity, and when I came of age, I went and seized on O’Sullivan Castle, and fortified it, and got a crown and sceptre, and reigned in great peace many years. But as the devil would have it—”

“ Jerry,” said I, “ I must insist on hearing no more of these monstrous *untruths*.”

“Untruths!” cried he. “Why, you might as well give me the lie at once. O murder! to think I would tell a falsehood about the matter!”

“Sir,” said I, “’tis a falsehood on the very face of it.”

“’Pon my conscience then,” cried he, “’tis as like your own story as one pea is like another. And sure I did not contradict you (whatever I might think, and I have my thoughts too, I can tell you,) when you talked so glib of your great estates; though, to be sure, your ladyship is as poor as a rat. Howsomever, since you will have it so, ’tis all a falsehood, sure enough; but now you shall hear the real story; though, for that matter, any body can tell truth, and no thanks to them.

“Well, then, my father was nothing more than a common labourer, and just *poor enough* to be honest, but not poor

enough to be a rogue. Poverty is no great disgrace, provided one comes honestly by it; for one may get poor as well as rich by knavery. So, being poor, father used to make me earn odd pennies, when I was a boy; and at last I got so smart, that he resolved on sending me to sell chickens at the next town. But as I could only speak Irish at that time, by reason we lived up the mountains, he sat down and taught me a little English, in case any gentlefolks should ask me about my chickens. Now, Jerry, says he, in Irish, if any gentleman speaks to you, of course it will be to know the price of your chickens; so you are to say, *three shillings, Sir*. Then to be sure he will be for lowering the price, so you are to say stoutly, *No less, Sir*; and if he shakes his head, or looks angry, 'tis a sign he won't buy unless you bate a little, so

you are to say, *I believe I must take two, Sir.*

“ Well, I got my lesson pat, and off I set, with my hair cut and my face washed, and thinking it the greatest day of my life ; and I had not walked a hundred yards from the house, when I met a gentleman.

“ Pray how far is it to the next village ?” says he.

“ Three shillings, Sir,” says I.

“ You are a saucy fellow,” says he.

“ No less, Sir,” says I.

“ I will give you a box in the face,” says he.

“ I believe I must take two, Sir,” says I.

“ But, instead of two, egad, I got six, and as many kicks as would match ‘em ; and home I ran howling.— Well, that was very well, so when I told father *that I was beaten for nothing:*

“ I warrant you were not,” says he; “ and if I had done so by my poor father, he would have broken every bone in my skin,” says he. “ But he was a better father than I am,” says he.

“ How dare you say that your father was better than my father,” says I; and upon this, father takes me by the ear, and lugs me out of the house. Just as we got outside, the same gentleman was passing by; and he stopped, and began to complain of me to my father; and then the whole matter came out, and both of them laughed very heartily.

“ Well, what do you think? ’Pon my veracity, the gentleman took me home with him to clean the knives and boots. And then he sent me to school, where I learned English; and then I began to tend at table, and at last became a regular servant in the family.

“ Well, here I lived several years, and might have lived till now, but that one night, when mistress had company, while bringing in the tray of cake and wine, down I came, and broke all the glasses.

“ By this and that,” says mistress ; (only to be sure, mistress did’nt swear) “ you are quite drunk,” says she.

“ Never tasted a drop all day,” says I ; and it was true for me, ’cause I did not begin till evening.

“ Who taught you to tell falsehoods ?” says she.

“ Troth, you did,” says I ; “ for you taught me to tell visitors you were not at home, when all the time you are peeping down the bannisters. Fine fashions, indeed ! Nobody is ever at home now-a-days, but a snail,” says I. And I would have said more too, but *that master kicked me out of the house.*

“ Well, that was very well ; and now my misfortunes were all before me, like a wheelbarrow.

“ This happened in the year of the Rebellion ; so, being out of service, I lived at alehouses ; and there it was that I met gentlemen with rusty superfine on their backs, and with the longest words in the world. They soon persuaded me that old Ireland was going to ruin ; I forget how now, but I know I had the whole story pat at that time ; and the end of it was, that I became an United Irishman.

“ Howsomever, though I would have died for my country, it would be carrying the joke too far to starve for her, and I had now spent all my wages. So, at last, back I went to my old master, and fell on my knees, and begged his pardon for my bad conduct when I lived with him, and prayed of him to

take me once more. Well, he did ; and it was only two nights after that we heard a great noise outside, and master comes running into the kitchen.

“ Jerry,” says he, “ here are the rebels breaking into the house ; and as I know you are a faithful fellow, take this sword and pistol, and stand by me.”

“ No, but I will stand before you,” says I. So we mustered our men, five in all, and posted ourselves on the head of the stairs ; when in burst the rebels into the hall, and we began a parley. “ Why then, is that Barney Delany ?” says I to their captain.

“ Why then, is that Jerry Sullivan ?” says he to me. “ You are one of us,” says he, “ so now turn round and shoot your master,” says he.

“ I will cut off both my hands *first*,” says I.

“ Take that then,” says he; and he fires a shot, and I another, and to it we kept, till we beat them all off.

“ Well, in a few months afterwards, this same Barney being made prisoner, I was bound over as witness against him. So some of the gentlemen with the long words came to me, and told me how wrong I had acted in fighting for my master, instead of for my country, and that I must make amends by giving evidence in Barney’s favour.

“ Well, they puzzled me so, that from then till now I never could make out whether I was right or wrong in standing by master. But somehow, I think I was right; for though patriotism (as the gentlemen call it) is a fine thing, yet, after all, there is nothing like gratitude. Why, if the devil himself did me a kind office, I believe I would make shift to do him another,

and not act like the clergy, who spend their whole lives in snubbing at him, and calling him all manner of names, though they know, that, but for him, there would not be a clergyman or a fat living in the kingdom.

“ Howsomever, I was persuaded to do the genteel thing by Barney Delany; so, when the day for the trial came, I drank myself pretty unintelligible; and I swore point blank, before judge and jury, that I did not know Barney good or bad, and that all I knew of him was good; and I bothered the lawyers, and they turned me from the table, and threatened to indite me for perjury. But it was the people that did praise me, and call it iligant swearing, mighty pretty evidence; and I was the great man of the day; and they took me to the fair that was hard by, where *we* *tippled* a little more, and then we *sallied* forth ripe for fun.

“ Well, as we were running through the fair, what should I see but a man’s bald head sticking out of a hole in one of the tents—to cool, I suppose,—so I just lifted up my cudgel, and just laid it down again; when, in a moment, out came a whole set of fellows from the tent, and the man asks which of us had broken his head.

“ It was myself,” says I, “ but curse me if I could help it, that skull of your’s looked so inviting.”

“ Accordingly both parties began a battle, and then others, who had nothing better to do, came and joined; they did not know why, but no matter for that. Any one may fight when there is an occasion; but the beauty of it is, to fight when there is no occasion at all.

“ Howsomever, in the midst of it up came the military to spoil sport as usual; and they dispersed us, and made

some of us prisoners, I among the rest, and we were put into Bridewell. Well, that was very well. So at night we contrived to break it open, beat the keepers, and make our escape. Then what to do with myself was the question. It would go hard with me if I were caught again ; so I skulked about the country several days, till happening to meet some lads going beyond seas to reap the English harvest, they persuaded me to buy a reaping-hook, and go with them.

“ But to be sure, to be sure, such a hurricane as we had at sea, and such tumbling and tossing ; and then we were driven to the world’s end, or the Land’s End, or some end ; but I know I thought I was come to my own end. In short, such wonderful adventures never were known.”

“ *What adventures, my friend ?*”

cried I. "I love to hear wonderful adventures."

"Why," said he, "we had an adventure every moment, for every moment we were near going to the bottom."

"And was that all?" cried I.

"Then," said he, "there was such pulling of ropes, and reefing and rigging; and we went over so many seas and channels; the Irish Channel, and the British Channel, and the Bristol Channel, and the Baltic Sea, and the Atlantic Sea, and—Oh dear, as good as forty more."

"Forty more!" cried I. "And pray what were their names?"

"Bad luck to me if I can remember," said he.

"Probably you were in the Red Sea," said I.

"To be sure I was."

“ And in the Black Sea?”

“ No doubt of it.”

“ And in the White Sea, and the Pacific Ocean?”

“ In every mother’s soul of them.”

“ And pray what kind of seas are they?” asked I.

“ Why,” said he, “ the Red Sea is as red as blood, and the Black Sea is as black as ink, and the White Sea is the colour of new milk, or nearer butter-milk ; and the Pacific—What’s that word ?”

“ Pacific,” said I.

“ And what is the meaning of Pacific ?” said he.

“ It means peaceful or calm,” answered I.

“ Gad, I thought so,” said he, “ for the devil a wave that same ocean had on it high or low. ’Pon my conscience, *it was as smooth as the palm of my hand.*”

“Take care, Jerry,” said I, laughing; “I am afraid ——”

“Why then,” cried he, “that I may never ——”

“Hush!” said I. “No swearing.”

“By dad,” cried he, “you had better tell my story yourself; for you seem resolved to have it all your own way. May be you won’t believe me neither, when I tell you that I landed?”

“As you are not at sea now,” said I, “I will believe you.”

“Well then,” said he, “I suppose you will believe that I made a little money by reaping, and then trudged to London to try my fortune.”

“I make no doubt of the fact,” said I. “But pray how did you contrive to subsist in London at first?”

“By spitting through my teeth,” said Jerry.

“Take care,” cried I. “This I suspect is another ——”

“If you mean lie,” said he, “I have caught you at last; for ’tis as true as true can be, and I will tell you all about it. You must know that ’tis now the fashion for gentlemen to be their own coachmen; and not only to drive like coachmen, but to talk, walk, dress, drink, swear, and even spit like coachmen. Well, two days after my arrival in London, as I was standing in the street, and looking about, I happened to spit through my teeth, to the envy and admiration of a gentleman that was just driving his own carriage by me. For he stopped, and called me to him, and swore I should get half-a-crown if I would teach him to *pickle a wig*,—that was the word. So when he gave me plain English for it, *I closed with him*, and went to his

house, and taught him to spit so well, that my fame spread through the town, and all the fashionable bloods came to me for instruction ; till at last I had a good mind to set up a Spitting Academy.

“ Well, I had now spit myself into such affluence, that I refused a coachman’s seat with forty pounds a year (for, as I said, even a curate had more than that) ; and may be, instead of a seat on the box, I might at last have risen to a seat in the Parliament (for many a man has got there by dirtier tricks than mine), but that my profession, which was of a nature to dry up my mouth, forced me to frequent porter-houses ; where, as the devil would have it, I met other gentlemen, such as I had met before, and with just the same set of long words.

“ In a short time, all of us agreed

that our country was ruined, and that something must be done. So we made ourselves into a club, for the purpose of writing ballads about the war, and the taxes, and a thousand lashes that a soldier got. And we used to set ten or twelve ballad-singers round a table in our club-room, each with her pint of beer; and one of our club would teach them the tune with a little kit, while I was in a cock-loft overhead composing the words. And they reckoned me the best poet of them all; and they told me that my writings would descend to posterity; and sometimes the thoughts came so quick on me, that I was obliged to chalk them down on the back of the bellows. But whenever I wanted an idea, I read the *Weekly Register*; and then between the *Register* and the liquor, I got *worked up* to such a pitch of poetry,

that my blood used to run cold in the morning, at the thoughts of what I would have done at night.

“ Well, one evening, the ballad-singers were round the table, sipping and singing to the little kit, and I had just popt down my head through the trap-door of the cock-loft, to ask the chairman the rhyme for *Reform* :

“ Confound you,” says he, “ didn’t I tell you twenty times ’tis *a storm* ;” when in bursts the door, and a parcel of peace-officers seize him, and the whole set, for holding seditious meetings, and publishing inflammatory songs. Think of that ! when I protest to you our only object was, by causing disunion, and convincing our enemies that we could not carry on the war, to procure a speedy and honorable peace.

“ Howsomever, I got out of the

scrape by being concealed in the cock-loft; and I remember well it was on that very night I first saw my wife."

"Ah," said I, "give me the particulars of that event, the first meeting of lovers is always so interesting!"

"Why," said he, "going home sorrowful enough after the ruin of our club, I resolved to drown care in a noggin; and accordingly turned into a gin-shop, where I found three fruit-women from Covent Garden, bound on the same errand."

"What dram shall we drink?" says they.

"Brandy," says one.

"Gin," says another.

"Anniseed-water," says another.
And so they fell to and drank.

"I am happy that I ever came to this City of Lunnun; for my fortune *is made*," says Brandy.

“ If my father had lived, I would be brought up to good iddication,” says Gin.

“ If my mother had lived, I would be brought up at a boarding-school,” says Anniseed-water.

“ Why, curse you,” says Gin, “ what was your mother but an old apple-woman ?”

“ And curse you,” says Anniseed-water, “ what was your father but a gallows-bird of a bum-bailiff ?”

“ And then they fell a fighting and scratching ; and Anniseed-water (the present Mrs. Jerry Sullivan) was getting well cuffed, when I came to her assistance. So that was our first meeting.”

“ You may boast of it,” said I. “ Now then for your courtship.”

“ You shall hear,” said he. “ She was so much obliged to me, that she

asked me home to tea, and I went. I found her a buxom widow, and at that time she was as fine a doorful, as tight a wench over a washing-tub, as you would wish to see. And there was her daughter, and a great deal of good company;—the tailor's wife, and the barber's wife, and the pawnbroker's wife; and none so grand as they. And they told as many lies over the first dish of tea as a parcel of porters would over twenty barrels of strong beer. And a young valet, who I could see was courting the widow, swore that it was as good to be out of the world as out of the fashion, and then he whispered to her that she looked killing genteel. But I only pinched her elbow, and I thought she liked that better."

"It was very vulgar, however," observed I. "The first process is to kiss *the hand*."

“Ogh!” cried Jerry, “that is a slobbering trick, to be mumbling knuckles just as a pup niggles at a bone. I am the man to take at once, and fluster a woman, and reckon her ribs for her. No creeping up, and up, and up; and then down, and down, and down, for me—Why, as I hope to be saved, I gave that same widow a thundering kiss on three days acquaintance.”

“Poorthing!” exclaimed I. “Well, and what did she say?”

“Say? why she said, “Be quiet now, though I know you can’t.” So, of course, I kissed her still more; while she changed colour in a minute as often as a blackberry in a month. “Ha done, do;” says she, “or I will call out, only there is nobody at home;”—when, at the moment, in pops the valet, and catches us lip to lip.

“Now he was a conceited sort of a

chap, who used to set himself off with great airs, shew his white hands—that, I verily believe, he washed every day of his life;—curse and swear just like a gentleman, keep a tooth-brush, and make both his heels meet when he bowed.

“ Well, I had nothing upon earth to oppose to all this but a bit of a quarrel;—that was *my* strong point;—and sure enough, I gave him such a beating for catching us, that the widow thought me main stout, and married me in a week.

“ With her money I set up shop; and I did not much mind her being ten years older than myself, since she was ten times richer. I only copied my own father there; for he once happened to be divided between two girls, one of them with a single cow for her portion, *and the other with two cows; so he*

consulted his landlord which of them he should marry, and his landlord bade him by all means marry the girl with the two cows; "for," says he, "there is not a cow difference between any two women."

"So now that is my history."

"If I am to collect from it," said I, "the character of your countrymen in your own class of life, I must conclude that they are frank, generous, and noble; but neglected in their morals and education, and oppressed by their superiors."

"Ay, there is the matter," said Jerry. "By way of keeping us quiet they keep us down. Now that is just the way to prevent our keeping quiet, for it is natural that men who are kept down should try to rise up."

"And why do they keep you down?" asked I.

“ Because,” answered he, “ we are of one religion, and they of another ; and they say our religion is so bad, that it would make us keep them down, if they did not keep us down.”

“ Then,” said I, “ you ought to be greatly obliged to them for keeping you down ; because that is doing what they condemn, lest you should do it. Now it is the highest possible test of goodness, to become criminal ourselves, in order to keep our friends virtuous.”

“ A wise legislator,” said the minstrel, “ ought not to forget the eighteenth century, in his retrospection to the sixteenth, nor in his anticipation of the twentieth.”

“ I know nothing of antiskipping,” said Jerry, “ but I will tell you a bit of a story. When I first went to London, and was poor, I used to dine in a cellar, with other Irishmen, where

the knives and forks were chained to the table, for fear we should steal them; though in my mind, the surest way to make a rogue, is to let him know that you think him one. Well, when we began to grow rich, we got a spirit, and broke the chains, and paid for them; and broke them again, and paid for them again, and so on. At last the master began to see that the same spirit which made us break the chains would prevent us from stealing the knives and forks; so he took off the chains, and then his table was no disgrace, and we brought more company to it, and he made his fortune."

The minstrel and warden now retired to their allotted place of rest—the barouche. Each was to keep watch in turn at the castle gate, and to toll the hour on the bell.

The wind still moaned round the

turret; and now the fire, ghastly in decay, but just tinged the projecting folds of the hangings. Dismal looked the bed as I drew near; and while I lifted the velvet pall to creep beneath, I shivered, and almost expected to behold the apparition of a human face starting from under it. When I lay down, I kept my eyes quite closed, for fear of seeing something; nor was it till the third bell had tolled that I fell asleep.

Adieu.

LETTER XXXVIII.

I ROSE early this morning, and summoned Jerry to the Black Chamber, for my head was teeming with the most important projects.

“My friend,” said I, “though *Lady Gwyn* has already acknowledged me as

the rightful owner, not alone of this castle, but of the house that she herself inhabits, yet I cannot apply to my tenantry for rent, or even raise a sum of money sufficient to purchase my breakfast, till she surrenders up those deeds and parchments which would give me a legal claim. Now as I fear I shall find it a hard matter to make her do so, I have resolved on proposing a compromise, and on waving all title to the house and demesne that she now occupies, provided she will consent to put me in formal possession of this castle, and all the land appertaining to it.

“ I have therefore determined to pay her ladyship a visit for this purpose; but as I was driven from her house with disgrace once before, I mean to return thither now with such a train of domestics as shall put it out of her power to offer me insult, or detain my person.

“ Now, Warden, if I could but hire a set of servants, who would consent to live in my castle and defend it, I would, on my part, give each of them a lot of round, and consider them as feudal vassals; and they could accompany me to Lady Gwyn’s. I have therefore to request that you will instantly set off, and endeavour to procure them for me, as no time is to be lost.”

“ Begging your ladyship’s pardon,” said Jerry, “ you are sending me of a fool’s errand: for who but madmen would hire as servants in such a castle as this? Would you have them build swallows’ nests for themselves under the windows, and live on suction like the snipes?”

“ Mr. Sullivan,” said I, “ cast no sarcasms, but go and do as you are desired.”

“ Well, from this moment out, I say *nothing*,” cried Jerry. “ Nothing at all

. at all: but like the old woman's crow,
I will be the devil for thinking."

"Another sarcasm?" said I.

"May be 'tis better for me to go at
once, before I get into a scrape," cried
he. "So now, your ladyship, how
many of these same feudal vessels, as
you call 'em; these vessels that are to
have no drink ——"

"Jerry! ——"

"Well, well, give me my directions
quick, and there is my hand on my
mouth till I am out of the castle."

"You may hire about fifteen or
twenty of them," said I. "But re-
member, I will have no dapper foot-
men, with smirking faces. I must have
a clan such as we read of in the middle
ages; fellows with Norman noses, and
all sorts of frowns—men of iron, fit to
live in comets."

"Better live in comets, than——"

But he clapped his hand on his mouth in time, and then ran down the steps.

During his absence, I paid a visit to the poor cottagers, and after having sat with them awhile, and promised them assistance before evening, I returned towards the castle.

On approaching it, I perceived, to my great surprise, Jerry also advancing at the head of about twenty strange looking men, all armed with bludgeons.

“ Here are the boys!” cried Jerry. “ Here are the true sort. Few Norman noses, I believe, but all honest hearts ; and though they never lived in comets, egad they lived in Ireland, and that is worth fifty comets. Look at ’em. Hold up your heads, you dogs. They came over only to save the hay, and reap the harvest ; but when they found *their countryman* and a woman in distress,

they volunteered their services ; and now here they are, ready for that same Lady Gwyn, or any lady in the land."

" Welcome, my friends," said I ; " and be well assured that I will reward you munificently."

" Three cheers !" cried Jerry.

They gave three cheers.

My heart dilated with exultation at beholding this assemblage of feudal vassals at my command ; and in a moment I had arranged my project. As it was expedient to inspire Lady Gwyn with respect and awe, I resolved on making the best possible display of my power, taste, and feudal magnificence. Of course, I meant to visit her in my barouche ; and since I had no horses for it, my plan was to make some of my domestics draw it in a triumphal *manner*, while the rest should follow

in procession. To let them escort me in their own ragged and unclassical dresses was impossible ; but I think you will give me credit for my ingenuity in supplying them with others. I determined to divide the black cloth into large pieces, which they should wear as cloaks, and to stick a black feather in each of their hats, a costume that would give them the pleasing appearance of Udolphian Condottieri.

We now set about making the cloaks, but as we had not sufficient cloth remaining, we were obliged to strip the Black Chamber of part of its hangings.

I had appropriated a large portion of the cloth to make flowing drapery for Higginson, whom I meant to take in the barouche with me ; but as minstrels never wear hats, and have always bald heads, I was at a loss how to manage *about his*, since he still cherished and

curled his locks, with a spruceness most unmeet for minstrelsy. At last, after repeated assurances how much better he would look, I persuaded him to let Jerry shave the crown of his head.

Accordingly, Jerry performed the tonsorial operation in the Black Chamber, while I remained below, fixing the feathers and cloaks on my domestics. These poor fellows, who, I suppose, had never read even an alphabet, much less a romance, in their lives, stood gaping at each other in silent wonder, though some of them attempted unmeaning, and, I must say, troublesome jests on what was going forward.

When drest, a more formidable and picturesque group than they presented you never beheld, and while I was still admiring them, forth from the turret *issued the minstrel*. But such a spec-

tacle! Half his huge head was shorn of its hair: his black garments, knotted just under his bare neck, gave a new ghastliness to his face, while his eyes, as he rivetted them upon me, were starting out of their sockets with anxiety and agitation. He looked preternatural. To contain was impossible: I began laughing, and the Irishman uttered a shout of derision.

The poor man looked round him, turned as pale as ashes; his face began to work and quiver, and at last he burst into a piteous fit of crying. Then suddenly lifting a prodigious stone, he whirled it at Jerry's head, who ducked for his life, and saved it.

"And what did I do to you?" cried Jerry.

"You shaved my head because you knew it would spoil my looks," cried *the minstrel*. "And you are endea-

youring to outdo me with my mistress, and she likes you better than me;—but it cannot be holpen. Oh, dear, dear!”

I tried to sooth him : nothing would do, nor could I persuade him to accompany me ; so now, all being ready, I posted two sentinels on the top of the turret, and then got into my barouche. Six vassals were deputed to draw it, the rest followed with their oaken saplings under their cloaks, and Jerry headed the whole. Never was a more august procession ; and I will venture to say, that this country, at least, never saw any thing like it.

As we proceeded along the road, the people ran out of their houses to gaze on us. Some said that we were strolling players, and others swore that we were going to a funeral ; while a rabble of boys and girls capered at our heels, and gathered as we went.

It was not till about five o'clock that we reached Lady Gwyn's avenue. We paused there a moment, while I made my attendants shake the dust from their cloaks, and wipe the barouche; and now, with a beating heart, I found myself at her door.

Jerry then pealed an authoritative rap. The door opened. The servant stared.

"Inform the Lady Gwyn," said I, "that her niece, the Lady Cherubina de Willoughby, desires the honour of a conference with her."

The fellow grinned, and vanished; and, in a few minutes, out came her ladyship, accompanied by several guests, some of whose faces I remembered having seen there before. I therefore felt doubly delighted that I had come in such feudal and chivalric *pomp*.

They greeted me with great kindness and respect.

Carelessly bowing to Lady Gwyn, as I sat half reclined in the barouche, I thus addressed her :

“ I now come to your ladyship with a proposal, which it is as generous in me to offer, as it will be politic in you to accept. And first, learn, that I am at this moment in actual possession of Monkton Castle, the noble seat of my ancestors. To that castle, and to this house, your ladyship has already acknowledged my just right; and to both, of course, I can establish my claim by a judiciary process.

“ As, however, I prefer a more amicable mode of adjustment, and am willing to spare the effusion of money, I now declare my readiness to make over this house and demesne to your ladyship, and to your heirs for ever, on

condition that you, on your part, will surrender to me, without delay or reservation, the title deeds of Monkton Castle, and all the Monkton estate. This is a generous proposal. What say you? Yes or no?"

"Lady Cherubina," returned her ladyship, "I cannot think of entering into terms with you, till you restore the portrait that you purloined from this house. But, in the mean time, as a proof of my desire to settle matters amicably, I request the honour of your company at dinner to-day."

"Your ladyship must excuse me," said I, with a noble air. "During our present dispute respecting this house, I should deem it derogatory to my honour and my dignity, were I to enter it in the capacity of guest."

"Why then, death and 'ounds!" cried Jerry, "is it to refuse so good

an offer, after starving all the morning!"

"Starving!" cried Lady Gwyn.

"We have not put a morsel inside our mouths this blessed day," said Jerry; "and even yesterday we dined on potatoes and milk, and a sort of a contrivance of a cake that your ladyship would'nt throw to your cat."

I thought I should drop at this exposure of our poverty, and I commanded him to be silent.

"Time enough for silence when one has spoken," cried he. "But sure, would'nt it vex a saint to hear you talking about honour and dignity, when all the time you are in a starving state!"

"Sensibly remarked," said Lady Gwyn. "And pray, my good fellow, who are you?"

"My warden," answered I quickly.

lest he should speak. “ And these are my feudal vassals ; and I have left my minstrel, and the rest of my faithful people, on the battlements of the eastern tower, just over the Black Chamber, to guard my castle.”

“ And for all this fine talk,” cried Jerry, “ we have not so much as a rap farthing amongst the whole set of us. So pray, your ladyship, do make her stay dinner—Do. Or may be,” (said he, getting closer and whispering Lady Gwyn), “ may be you would just lend her half-a-crown or so ; and, ’pon my soul, I will pay you myself in ten days.”

“ Silence, traitor !” cried I, rising in the barouche, and dignifying my manner. “ I do not want a dinner : I would not accept of a dinner ; but above all, of a dinner in this house, *till I am mistress of it!*”

“ And is it true,” cried Jerry to Lady Gwyn, “ that she is the real mistress of this house?”

“ Oh! certainly, certainly,” said her ladyship.

“ Oh! certainly, certainly,” said the guests.

“ Well, bad luck to me, if ever I believed it, till this moment,” cried Jerry. “ And why then won’t your ladyship give it up to her?”

“ Because,” answered she, “ the quiet surrender of an estate was never yet read of in romances.”

“ ’Tis the only rational excuse you can assign,” said I.

“ Dinner is on the table,” said the butler coming to the door.

“ And so,” cried Jerry to me, “ you won’t dine in this house till you are mistress of it?”

“ Never, as I hope to see heaven!” answered I.

“And so,” cried he to Lady Gwyn, “you won’t make her mistress of it?”

“Never, as I hope to see heaven!” answered she.

“Why then,” cried Jerry, “since one refuses to dine in it till she is mistress of it, and since the other owns that she ought to be mistress of it, and yet won’t make her mistress of it; by the powers, I will make her mistress of it in two minutes!”

So saying, he shouted some words in an uncouth jargon (Irish, I suppose) to my vassals, several of whom instantly darted into the house, others brandished their sticks in the faces of the guests; Jerry himself ran, lifted me from the barouche, and bore me into the hall; while the rest brought up the rear, and beat back the gentlemen who were attempting to rush between us and the door.

Jerry set me down in the hall, where

I stood motionless, while some of my domestics scudded, with merry uproar, through kitchen, parlour, drawing-room, garret; and drove footman, maid, valet, cook, scullion, and lap-dog, all out of the house.

“ Now then,” cried Jerry, shutting the hall-door, “ your ladyship is in quiet possession for ever and ever.”

“ Jerry,” said I, “ there is no knowing how this will end. But come into that parlour, for some of my people are making a sad riot there.”

In we went; it was the dining-room, and to my great astonishment, I found about a dozen of my domestics already round the table, eating and drinking as if nothing had happened. In vain Jerry and I desired them to desist; they did not even seem to hear us. They laughed and capered, and tore whole joints with their hands, and

swallowed the richest wines from the decanters. The rest soon flocked in, and then such a scene of confusion arose as struck me with utter dismay. And now, having glutted themselves, they ran to the windows, and exhibited the mangled meat and diminished wine to the dismayed eyes of poor Lady Gwyn. There she stood in the midst of her friends, looking like a bedlamite; and as soon as I appeared, she beckoned me, with the most frantic gesticulations, to open the window.

I called the warden to my side, and flung up the sash.

“Let us in, let us in!” cried she. “My house will be destroyed by these diabolical miscreants! Oh! let us in, let us in!”

“Lady Gwyn,” said I, “these outrages are on my house, not on your’s.”

But be well assured that whatever injury your personal property may sustain, it is contrary to my wishes, and will by me be amply compensated."

"Gracious powers!" exclaimed she. "My precious cabinet, and all my furniture will be demolished! Won't you save my house? won't you? dear ma'am, won't you?"

"*Your* house?" cried Jerry. "Why I had your own word for it just now that it was my own lady's house. So, if you told a lie, take the consequence. But we have got possession, and let me see who will dare drive us out."

"Here they are that will soon drive you out!" cried a servant.

"Here they are, here they are!" echoed every one.

All eyes were now directed down the avenue, and to my horror, I per-

ceived a large party of soldiers, in full march towards the house.

"We shall have a bloody battle of it," whispered Jerry. "But never fear, my lady, we will fight to the last gasp. Hollo, lads, here is a battle for you!"

At that magic word, all the Irishmen clubbed their sticks, and ran forward.

"We must surrender," said I. "Never could I bear the dreadful contest."

"By the mother that bore me," cried Jerry, "I will defend the house in spite of you!"

"Then I will walk out of it," said I.

"Well, surrender away!" cried Jerry, "and may all the—Oh! murder, murder, to give up your own house without a bit of a battle!"

By this time the soldiers had arrived, and the magistrate who was at their head, advanced, and desired me to have the door opened instantly.

“Provided you pledge yourself that none of my brave fellows shall be punished,” answered I.

“You shall all be punished with the utmost rigour of the law,” said the magistrate.

“Since that is the case then,” cried I, “and since I cannot keep possession of my house, I am resolved that no one else shall. Know, Sir, I have, at this instant, six of my domestics, each with a lighted brand, stationed in different apartments; and the moment you order your men to advance, that moment I give the signal, and the house bursts into a blaze.”

“If you dare,” cried the magistrate.

“Dare!” cried Lady Gwyn. “The creature would dare any thing. Dare! why she burned a house once before. She did, I protest to you; so pray, make some conditions with her, or she will burn this now. I tell you the girl is quite——” and she whispered something in the magistrate’s ear.

“Well,” said the magistrate to me, “will you promise never to come here again, provided I now let you and your gang pass without detention or punishment?”

“I will,” answered I. “But I must make some conditions too. “In the first place, will your ladyship give me back my cloaths and the money that I left behind me, when I was here last?”

“I will,” answered her ladyship.

“In the next place,” said I, “will your ladyship promise not to prevent

me from inhabiting Monkton Castle, till such time as the law shall determine which of us has a right to the contested estates?"

"Undoubtedly," replied her ladyship.

"And now," said I, "I must have the distinct and solemn declaration of every individual present, that neither myself nor my people shall suffer any molestation in consequence of what we have done."

All present pledged their honours.

"Now then," said I, "we will open the door."

Accordingly, the warden opened it, and I issued forth with a majestic demeanour, while my awful band marched after their triumphant mistress.

Lady Gwyn and her guests hastened into the house, without even wishing me good evening, and the soldiers drew up before the door.

In a few minutes, a servant came out with my dresses and the money. Having received them, I got into my barouche, and, drawn by my vassals, proceeded homeward. We were silent for some time, but at length I called Jerry to the side of the carriage.

"Well, my friend," cried I, quite cheerful, "I think we have come off famously."

"Yes," said Jerry.

"I flatter myself," added I, "we have made a good day's work of it."

"Yes," said Jerry.

"Nothing but yes!" said I. "Why now, do you not think we have obtained the most decisive advantages? Was it not a glorious affair?"

"Since I must speak out," cried Jerry, "I think it was the bluest business that ever was botched by politicians."

“It was all your own doing, however,” said I. “So now you may walk on, Sir.”

Jerry tossed his hat at one side, and strutted forward.

“Come back, Jerry,” cried I. “Here is my hand. You are a faithful fellow, and would have died for me.”

“Ah, bless you!” cried he. “You quarrel like a cat, but you make up like an angel!”

It was night before we reached the castle; and as I had not tasted a morsel all day, I dispatched Jerry to the village for provisions, and other matters. I then divided six guineas among my domestics, and desired them to return next morning, as I should want them to repair the fortifications, dig a mote, and excavate subterranean passages. They gave three cheers, and departed.

In about an hour Jerry returned with a cart containing an abundant stock of provisions ; — bread, meat, potatoes, tea, sugar, &c. besides, a kettle, plates, cups and saucers, &c.

After having unloaded and dismissed the cart, we made a fire in the Black Chamber, and supped. I then took a solitary walk, and carried some victuals to the poor cottagers. They received the donation with gratitude, and I left them to the comforts of a hearty meal.

It is now probable that I may reside some time at my castle; and as to my villa, I wish Lady Gwyn joy of it; for in my opinion it is a fright. Conceive the difference between the two. The villa mere lath and plaster; with its pretty little stucco-work, and its pretty little paintings, and its pretty little bronzes. Nice, new, sweet, and charm-

ing, are the only epithets that one can apply to it; while antique, sublime, terrible, picturesque, and Gothic, are the adjectives appropriate to my castello. What signify laced footmèn, Chinese vases, Grecian tripods, and Turkish sofas, in comparison with feudal vassals, ruined towers, black hangings, dampness, and ivy? And to a person of real taste, a single stone of this edifice is worth a whole cart-load of such stones as the onyx, and sardonx, and the other barbarous baubles belonging to Lady Gwyn. But nothing diverts me more than the idea that poor Lady Gwyn is twice as old as the house she lives in. I have got a famous simile on the subject. What think you of a decayed nut in an unripe shell? The woman is sixty if she is a day.

Adieu.

LETTER XXXIX.

THE moist shadows of night had fled, dawn shook the dew from his purple ringlets, and the sun, that well-known gilder of eastern turrets, arose with his usual punctuality. I too rose, and having now recovered my wardrobe, enjoyed the luxury of changing my dress; for I had worn the same cloaths several days, and consequently was become a perfect slattern. How other heroines manage, I cannot imagine; for I have read of some of them who were thrown among mountains, or into cells, and desolate chambers, and caverns; full of slime, mud, vermin, dust, and cobwebs, where they remained whole months without clean *linen*, soap, brush, towel, or comb; and,

At last, when rescued from captivity, forth they walked, glittering like the morning star, as fragrant as a lily, and as fresh as an oyster.

We breakfasted on the top of the tower; and after our repast, the minstrel told me that he had employed the day before in composing a Metrical Romance, called "Monkton Castle;" which, with my permission, he would now repeat.

I was delighted; and to give it every advantage, I placed him at the harp, flung his black garments over him, and making him sit on the battlements, endeavoured to fix him in the fine attitude of old Allan Bane; but his limbs were so muscular and impracticable, that I could make nothing of them. With an emphatic enunciation, he thus began.

MONKTON CASTLE.

A METRICAL ROMANCE.

“Awake, my harp, sweet plaintiff, wake once
more,

Now while bedight in shadowy amice dim,
Eve bathes the mountains in her radiant gore,

And edges ocean with a fiery rim.

And while I touch, with nails ypared anew,

Thy parallel and quadrupedal strings,

May fairies brush away the vesper dew,

That else mote moist the chorded chitterlings

And ah! full oft the learned tribe, I trow,

With baleful dews of cavil damp thy strain.

But morning shall return, the sun shall glow,

The baleful dews shall fly, the harp shall sound
again.

“It was a castle of turrets grey,

All nettles and chickweed inside;

Where the wind did howl the livelong day,

And the livelong night beside.

It had no windows or roof, I am sure,

Or parlour for Bell-accoyle;

Where a Belamay and a Belamoure,

In daynt Bellgards mote moyl.”

● “That same parlour,” said Jerry,
“has bells enough to bother the rook-
ery of Thomastown, and that is the
largest in Ireland.”

✠ “Nathlesse, to stablsh her rights, I ween,
Came to that castle fair Cherubine.
Nor the wind day and night could her astound,
Nor the nettles and chickweed that grew on
the ground.

She was of the house of De Willoughby,
And her story was long and melancholie ;
But her beauty never could rivalled be.

“Glittered her tresses like beams of sun,
And snake-like over her neck did run.
Her cheek, where dimples made beauteous breach,
Lovelily smiled, and the down on each
Was soft as fur of unfingered peach.

While thro’ her marble a blush did gleam,
Like ruddy berries, all crushed in cream,

✠
“The minstrel to the castle bied,
His mother’s hope, his mother’s pride.
Gramercy, how that mother cried!

He was a gentle man of thought,
And grave, but not ungracious aught.
His face with thinking lines was wrought.
And though his head was bald a space,
Soon will he get more hair i'th' place,
Than he who shore it will get grace."

"Now that is a slap at me!" cried
Jerry.

"Yet, though he sold full half his books,
To lay out money on his looks ;
The lady had such deep disdain ;
That the poor minstrel, in his pain,
From the hour that is natal,
To the hour that is fatal,
Mote sing these words, and sing in vain.

SONG.

*"The birds are all singing,
The bells are all ringing,
And tidings are bringing,
Of peace and of joy.
Then let us, my treasure,
In love without measure,
And tenderest pleasure,
Our moments employ."*

● “Eh! what? what’s all that?” cried Jerry. “Why sure—body o’ me, sure you ant—Oh, confound me, but ’tis making love to the mistress you are!”

The minstrel blushed, and more pointedly repeated;

“But her favourite warden, could he but sing,
He not unlistened, would touch the string.
Tho’ he was a man with unchisseled face;
From eye to eye too little a space;
A jester withouten one attic joke,
And the greatest liar that ever spoke.”

“Bad luck to you, what do you mean by that?” cried Jerry, running towards him. “I will box you for a shilling!”

“You are not worth one,” exclaimed the minstrel, starting up.

“I will leave your carcass not worth one,” cried Jerry.

“That would be more than your’s is worth now,” returned the minstrel.

“For shame, my friends!” cried
“Mr. Higginson, I declare your conduct is that of a child.”

“Because you treat me like one,” said he. “And you treat him like a man.”

“But you should treat him like a gentleman,” said I.

“Well, well, well,” cried the minstrel; there is my hand for you, Mr. Sullivan.”

“And there is mine for you,” said Jerry. “Hand in hand is better than fist to fist at any time.”

“I will defer hearing the remainder of your poem,” said I, “till you have altered it. But my good friend, do not forget to tell that I inhabit the *eastern* turret, and to give a full description of it. You might begin thus:

“He who would view that east turret aright,
Must go at rosy-finger'd morning bright.”

"Rosy-fingered morning!" cried Jerry. "Why, how can the morning have rosy fingers?"

"It has not," answered I. "The poets only say so by way of ornament."

"And yet," cried Jerry, "if I had said, when I was telling you my history, that I saw a set of red fingers and thumbs rising in the east every morning, I warrant you would have called me a liar, just as you did about that business of the Pacific Ocean."

"Why," said the minstrel, "we poets are permitted a peculiar latitude of language, which enables us to tell Homeric falsehoods, without fear of the society for discountenancing vice. Thus, when we speak of

'The lightning of her angel smile,'
we do not expect one to believe that fire comes out of her mouth, whenever it laughs,"

“Not unless her teeth were flints,” said Jerry. “But if you said that fire came out of her eyes, one would believe you sooner; for this I know, that many and many a time Molly has struck fire out of mine.”

“A heroine’s eye,” said I, “gives a greater scope to the poet than any thing in the world. It is all fire and water. If it is not beaming, or sparkling, it is sure to be drowned or swimming —”

“In the Pacific Ocean, I hope,” cried Jerry.

“No, but in tears,” said the minstrel. “And of these there is an infinite variety. There is the big tear and the bitter tear, and the salt tear and the scalding tear.”

“And, ah!” cried I, “how delightful, when two lovers lay cheek to cheek, and mingle these tears; o

when the tender youth kisses them from his mistress's cheek !”

“ Troth, then, that must be no small compliment,” said Jerry, “ since they are so brackish and scalding as you say. Water itself is maukish at any time, but salt water is the devil. Well, if I took such a dose of a snivelling chit's tears, I would season it with a dram, or my name is not Jerry.”

“ And, by the by, I wish Jerry were not your name,” said I. “ 'Tis so vulgar for a warden. Indeed, I have often thought of altering it to *Jeronymo*; which, I fancy, is the Italian of *Jerry*. For, in my opinion, nothing can equal Italian names ending in O.”

“ Except Irish names beginning with O,” cried Jerry.

“ Nay,” said I, “ what can be finer

than Montalto, Stefano, Morano, Rinaldo, Ubaldo, Utaldo?"

"I will tell you," said Jerry. "O'Brien, O'Leary, O'Flaherty, O'Flanigan, O'Guggerty, O'Shaugnassy —"

"Oh, ecstasy!" exclaimed a voice just beneath the turret. I looked down, and beheld—Montmorenci himself, clad in armour, and gazing up at me with an attitude that mocked mortal pencil.

"I waved my hand, and smiled.

"What? whom do I behold?" cried he. "Ah, 'tis but a dream! Yet I spoke to her, I am sure I spoke to her; and she beckoned me. Merciful powers! Why this terror? Is it not Cherubina, and would Cherubina hurt her Montmorenci?"

"Jerry, Jerry," said I; "run down to the Black Chamber, and clean it out quick. Sweep the ashes into a corner,

hide the pipkin and kettle, pin up the cloaks against the walls; put the leg of mutton under the bed. Run, run. —My lord, the Lady Cherubina hastes to receive your lordship at her ever-open portal.”

I then descended, and met him beneath the gateway. His greeting was frantic, but decorous; mine endearing, but reserved. Several very elegant things were said on both sides. Of course, he snatched my hand, and fed upon it.

At last, when I supposed that Jerry had regulated the room above, I conducted his lordship up the steps; while I anticipated his delight at beholding so legendary, fatal, and inconvenient a chamber.

His astonishment was, indeed, excessive. He stared round and round,

admired the black hangings, the bed, the bell, and the horn.

“ I see,” said he, advancing to the ashes, “ that you are even classical enough to burn a fire of wood. But ha! (and he started,) what do mine eyes behold beneath these embers? A **BONE**, by all that is horrible! Perhaps part of the skeleton of some hysterical innocent, or some pathetic count, who was murdered centuries ago in the haunted apartment of this mysterious castle. Interesting relic! Speak, Lady Cherubina. Is it as I suspect?”

“ Why,” said I, “ I believe—that is to say—for aught I can tell ——”

“ ’Pon my conscience,” cried Jerry, “ her ladyship knows just as well as I do that ’tis nothing but the blade-bone of mutton which she got broiled for her supper last night.”

“Impossible, Sir!” exclaimed his lordship. “A heroine never eats of a four-footed animal. ’Tis always the leg of a lark, or the wing of a chicken.” And so saying, he began divesting himself of his spear, shield, and helmet.

“Pray, Mr. Blunderer,” whispered I to Jerry, “did I not desire you to clean out the room?”

“You did not say a word about the blade-bone,” said Jerry.

“But did I not bid you clean out the room?” repeated I.

“Don’t I tell you —” cried Jerry.

“Can’t you speak low?” said I.

“Don’t I tell you that not one syllable about the blade-bone ever came outside your lips?”

“Grant me patience!” said I. “Answer me yes or no. Did I, or did I not, order you to clean out the room?”

“Now bad luck to me,” said he.

“ if you ant all this time confounding the blade-bone of mutton with the leg of mutton that you bade me put under the bed. And accordingly ——”

“ Gracious goodness!” said I, “ can’t you speak within your breath?”

“ And accordingly,” whispered he, “ I put it under the velvet pall, because I thought it might be seen under the bed.”

“ Well, that shewed *some* discretion,” said I.

“ Though after all my pains,” said Jerry, “ there is the man in the tin cloaths has just stripped down that same pall, and discovered the mutton, and the parsnips, and the bag of salt, and the pewter spoons, and ——”

“ Oh, Jerry, Jerry!” said I, dropping my arms lifeless at my sides; “ after that, I give you up!”

I then called to his lordship, and

drew off his attention, by beginning an account of all that had happened since our parting. He listened with great eagerness; and, after my recital, begged of the warden to retire with him, that they might consult on the best line of policy to be adopted in the present state of my affairs.

They descended the steps; I remained alone. Montmorenci had left his helmet, shield, and spear behind. I pressed each of them to my heart, heaved several sighs, and paced the chamber. Still I felt that I was not half fervent or tender enough; something was still wanting, and I had just asked myself if that something could be love, when I heard a sudden disturbance below; his lordship crying out, "Oh, what shall I do?" and Jerry bidding him "grin and bear it."

Down I hastened, and beheld Jerry belabouring him without mercy.

“Wretch,” cried I, rushing between them: “forbear.”

“Not till I beat him to a paste,” cried Jerry. “The villain, to go and offer me a bribe if I would help him in forcing you to marry him.”

“’Tis false as hell!” cried his lordship.

“I would stake my life that it is,” said I. “So now, Mr. Sullivan, down on your knees this moment, and ask pardon, or quit my service.”

“But can that restore the teeth he has knocked out?” exclaimed his lordship, with a finger in his mouth.

“Teeth!” cried I, shuddering.

“Two teeth,” said he.

“Two teeth!” exclaimed I, faintly.

“Two front teeth,” said he.

“Then all is over!” muttered I.
“Matters have taken a dreadful turn.”

“What do you mean?” cried he.

“My lord,” said I, “are you quite, quite certain that you have lost them?”

“See yourself,” cried he, lifting his lip. “They are gone, gone for ever!”

“They are indeed,” said I. “And now you may be gone too.”

“Ha! what mean you?” cried he.

“My lord,” said I, “of this you must be conscious, that a complete set of teeth are absolutely indispensable to a hero.”

“Well?” cried he, starting.

“Well,” said I, “having lost two of your’s, you must be conscious that you are no longer a hero.”

“You stretch my heart-strings!” cried he. “Speak! what hideous whim is this?”

“No whim, my lord,” answered I; “but principle, and founded on law

heroic; founded on that law, which rejects as heroes, the maimed, the blind, the deformed, and the crippled. Trust me, my good lord, teeth are just as necessary in the formation of a hero as a comb."

"By Heaven!" cried he; "I can get other teeth at a dentist's; a composition of paste that would amaze you. I can by all that is just."

"That you may, my lord," said I, "and be happy with them; for never can you be happy with me."

"I am wilder than madness itself!" cried he; "I am more desperate than despair! I will fly to the ends of the earth, hide in a cavern, and throw my ideas into a sonnet. On a fine summer's evening, when you walk towards the mountains, sometimes think of me."

"Never as a lover, my lord," said

I: "so put that out of your head at once. Oh! it shocks me to think I should ever have received you as one!"

He began a tremendous imprecation; but was interrupted by the sudden arrival of a gentleman on horseback, with a servant after him. The gentleman stopped, alighted, approached.

"Mr. Betterton!" cried I; "can it be possible?"

"Nothing is impossible," said he, with his obsequious bow and confirmed smile, "when the charming Cherubina prompts our efforts. You remember you left me in a ridiculous dilemma, which your friend Stuart contrived;—masterpiece of ingenuity, faith, and for which I freely forgive him: he's an excellent young fellow; excellent, 'pon my soul; and I have

made my friends so merry with an account of that affair. Well, I remained in limbo till the sessions, when none appearing to prosecute, the judge discharged me ; so the first use I made of my liberty was to visit Lady Gwyn, who told me that I should find you here : here therefore I am to pay you my devoirs."

I thanked him, and then bade Jerry run towards the village, and hurry my vassals ; as the castle lost much of its pomp without them.

Jerry went : my visitors recognized each other ; and already their hostile feelings and opposite interests had begun to manifest themselves, when, to my great surprise, three men turned short round the western tower, and stood before me.

" That is she !" cried one of them.

I looked at the speaker, and recog-

nized in him the postilion who had brought down the barouche.

"Your name is Cherry Wilkinson," said another of them to me.

"Sir," said I, haughtily: "my name is Lady Cherubina de Willoughby."

"That is your *travelling* name," rejoined he: "but your real name I discovered at your lodgings in Drury-Lane; which lodgings I found out from the wife of one Jerry Sullivan, the man that conspired with you to swindle Mr. Perrot, the coach-maker, out of the barouche yonder. You see, I have the whole story; so you need not deny it; and now, Miss, look at this warrant. I arrest you, in the king's name, for the most audacious piece of swindling that ever came in my way to know."

With these words he seized me, and

was dragging me from the castle, while I screamed for help.

“ A rescue ! a rescue ! ” cried Betterton, and collared the man who held me. Montmorenci laid hold of the other, and the servant felled the postilion to the ground. And now a furious fight began. The man whom Betterton had seized drew a pistol and fired it : at this moment, down came the minstrel from the turret ; I got loose and ran into the castle, nor ventured to look again, till, after much uproar, I heard a shout of victory from my friends : then venturing to the gateway, I saw the three wretches limping from the place, in piteous plight.

It now appeared that the ball aimed at Betterton had just grazed the fleshy part of his servant’s arm, which was bleeding a good deal. I felt much shocked, and assisted him in binding

the wound. This matter employed some minutes, and during that time, I could perceive Betterton and Montmorenci whispering earnestly together.

At last Betterton addressed me thus :

“ Now, Lady Cherubina, should we remain here much longer, we shall certainly be seized and imprisoned for having assaulted his majesty’s officers in the discharge of their duty. We have, therefore, nothing for it but flight. My house is but a few miles distant, and as these officers could not have known me, we shall be perfectly safe there. What says your ladyship? Shall we repair thither?”


“ Sir,” answered I; “ as I was not concerned in that assault, and as I am innocent of the crime for which they came to take me, nothing shall induce me to quit my castle: if they chuse to make another attempt, I shall go with

them, establish my innocence, and return triumphant. But if I am to act on the skulking system, how can I reside here at all?"

Montmorenci now joined his entreaties, but I remained immovable. Again they retired to consult, and again came forward.

"Lady Cherubina," said Betterton, "you must excuse me when I say that both Lord Montmorenci (for his lordship has just disclosed to me his noble lineage) and myself conceive ourselves fully warranted in compelling, if we cannot persuade your ladyship, to leave this castle (where we cannot remain to protect you), and in conveying you to my mansion, where you will be safe."

"Compel me?" cried I. "Compel me? But I disdain to hold farther *parley* with you. Farewell for ever.



Minstrel, follow me to the Black Chamber."

"Stop them!" cried Betterton.

His lordship placed himself between us and the gateway: the minstrel, brandishing his collected knuckles, struck him to the ground. Betterton assailed my brave defender behind, the servant before; but he fought with desperation, and his blow was like the kick of a horse. Still numbers appeared about to prevail; and now his breathing grew shorter, and his blow slower, when, transport to my sight! I beheld Jerry, with several of my vassals, come running towards us. They reached us: the tide of battle turns, and his lordship and the servant are well beaten with bludgeons; while Jerry himself does the honours to Betterton, in a kicking.

Nobody could bear it more gently

than he did ; and after it was over, he mounted his horse and vociferated :

“ Now, by all that is sacred, I will go this moment, raise the neighbourhood, and have you driven from your nest, you set of vipers ;—you common nuisances, you ! Lady Gwyn’s castle shall no longer be made the receptacle of ragged and marauding Irishmen.”

So saying, off he galloped on one horse, and his lordship on another ; while the servant trudged on foot.

We now held a grand council of war, for affairs began to wear an alarming aspect. If Betterton should put his threat of raising the neighbourhood into execution, a most formidable force, might be collected against us. After much deliberation, therefore, it was decided, that some of the vassals should be dispatched to collect more *of their countrymen*, who, they said,

slept in several adjoining villages. I too wrote a note to Susan, begging that she would raise a counterposse in my favour, and rescue me from an implacable enemy, as I had rescued her from a criminal and fatal attachment. This note I sent to her cottage by one of my vassals.

During this awful interval, the remainder of those who had been with me yesterday arrived. I planted sentinels and outposts, and employed the rest in filling up the windows with stones, repairing the breaches, and searching amidst the rubbish for the mouth of some subterranean cavern, where I might conceal myself in the last emergency.

As I had not a white and azure standard, like Beatrice, I directed Jerry to stain a large piece of muslin with the blood of the wounded ser-

vant, which still besprinkled the grass; then to fasten it on a long pole, and hoist it, as my banner, at an angle of the eastern turret.

Susan's cottage being only half a mile from the castle, the messenger soon returned with an answer, that she would certainly assemble her friends, and come to me. Just as he had announced these happy tidings, another came back, with a fresh accession of ten Irishmen; and in a short time more arrived; till at length we mustered to the amount of fifty.

I stood, and gloried in my strength. Already I beheld the foundation of a feudal settlement. Already I considered myself the restorer of that chivalric age, when neighbouring barons were deadly foes, and their sons and daughters clandestine lovers. Ah! what times for a heroine! It was then

that the Lady Buccleugh and the Duchess of Cleves flourished.

“And these,” cried I, in an ecstasy of enthusiasm, “these shall again revive in the person of Lady Cherubina De Willoughby!”

As I spoke, Jerry came to tell me that one of the scouts had just returned with information of his having seen a large party of Lady Gwyn’s tenants assembling about a quarter of a mile off; in order, as he found on inquiry, to drive us from the castle.

Now then was approaching the most important moment of my life, and I resolved to support my part with dignity. As the first step, I dressed myself in a style of magnificence suited to the occasion. Having flung the drapery of embroidered gauze over my white muslin, I next (in imitation of ancient heroines, who wore armour in

the day of battle), put Montmorenci's helmet on my head ; then, with his shield in the one hand, and his spear in the other, never did I look so lovely.

I now called up the warden, and constituted him commander of the forces ; then ordered him to send six picked men, and the minstrel, as my body-guards, up to the Black Chamber.

They came ; I equipped them in black cloaks and feathers, and made them mount to the top of the tower. In a few minutes afterwards I myself ascended with a beating heart. There I found the preparations for battle almost completed. The bloody standard was streaming to the gale ; the body-guards were collecting a heap of stones from the broken parapet ; while beneath the turret I beheld the whole

of my troops, with oaken staffs, marshalled in awful array. The spectacle was grand and imposing. Lightly I leaned on my spear; and while my feathered casque pressed my ringlets, and my purpled drapery floated and glistened in the sun, I stood on the battlements, mildly sublime, sweetly stern, amiable in arms, and adorned with all the terrible graces of beauty belligerent.

I now resolved to harangue my men, for the purpose of encouraging them, and of attaching them to my person; but as I knew nothing of political orations, I had nothing for it but to copy the speech of Beatrice in the *Knights of the Swan*; and those that I had read in the daily prints.

A profound silence prevailed; I waved my spear, and thus began.

“My brave associates, partners of

my toil, my feelings and my fame!
Two days have I now been sovereign
of this castle, and I hope I may flatter
myself that I have added to its prosperity. Young, and without experience, I merely claim the merit of blameless sentiments and intentions.

“Threatened with a barbarous incursion from my deadliest enemies, I have deemed it indispensable to collect a faithful band of vassals for my defence. They have come at my call, and I thank them.

“I promise to them all such laws and institutions as shall secure their happiness. I will acknowledge the majesty of the people. (*Applause*). I will give to them a full, fair, and free representation. (*Applause*). And I will grant to them a radical reform; or in other words, a revival of the feudal system. (*Shouts of applause*). I will

assume no monarchial prerogatives that are unjust; if I should, do not forget that the people have always the power and the right to depose a tyrant.

“ I promise that there shall be no dilapidated hopes and resources; no army of mercenaries, no army of spies, no inquisition of private property, no degraded aristocracy, no oppressed people, no confiding parliament, no irresponsible minister. (*Acclamation*). In short, I promise every thing. (*Thunders of acclamation*).

“ Each man shall have an acre of ground, a cottage, and an annual salary. (*Long life to you! cried the troops. That is the best thing you have said!*) Such is the constitution, such are the privileges that I propound to you. Now then, my brave fellows, will you consent on these conditions

to rally round my standard, to live in my service, and to die in my defence? (*We will! we will! cried they*).

“ Thank you, my generous followers; and the crisis is just approaching when I shall have occasion for your most strenuous exertions. Already my mortal foe prepares to storm my castle, and drive me from my hereditary domain. Already he has excited my own tenantry to sedition against me. Should he succeed in his atrocious object, I must return to my tears, and you to your sickles. But should we repel him, my government will be secured, my territory perhaps enlarged, my castle rebuilt; and the cause of liberty will triumph. What heart but throbs, what voice but shouts, at the name of liberty? (*Huzza!*) Is there a man amongst you who would refuse to lay

down his life for liberty? (*Huzza!*) And if, on an important occasion like the present, I might take the liberty—(*Huzza!*) to dictate, I would demand of you this day to sacrifice every earthly consideration in her sacred cause. I do demand it of you, my friends. I call upon your feelings, your principles, and your policy, to discard family, property, and life, in a cause so just, so wise, and so glorious. Let eye, foot, heart, hand, be firm, be stern, be valiant, be invincible!"

I ceased, the soldiery tore the blue air with acclamations, and the ravens overhead flew swifter at the sound.

I now found that it was not difficult to make a popular speech; and I judged that the same qualities which have made me so good a heroine, would, if I were a man, have made me just as illustrious a patriot.

After much entreaty, I persuaded the minstrel to deliver an address ; as he, being learned, might expound constitutions and political economy better than I. He therefore leaned over the battlements, and began.

“ Gentlemen,

“ Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I feel that words are inadequate to express my high sense of the honour you have conferred upon us. Gentlemen, I will institute an apt comparison between the foundation of this little settlement, and that of the ancient Romans ; in order to prove, that this, though small at present, may, like that, terminate in an extensive empire. Gentlemen, Rome took its rise from a set of the greatest beggars and reprobates that ever crawled upon earth——”

“ Throw him over, throw him over ! ” burst from the troops.

The minstrel shrunk back in consternation.

“ Silence, lads, cried Jerry, “ and I will make a bit of a speech for you ; but instead of sending you to Rome, I will send you no farther than Ballinasloe. (*Laughter and bravo !*). Eh, my boys, don’t you remember the good old fun at the fair there ? To be sure, how we used to break each other’s heads, without the least anger or mercy ; and to be sure, ’tis the finest feel in the world, when one gives a fellow a neat, clean, bothering blow over the skull, and down he drops like a sack ; then rises, and shakes himself like a wet dog, and begins again. (*Much laughter*). Ay, my boys, fighting may be an Englishman’s or a Frenchman’s business, but

by the Lord Harry, 'tis an Irishman's amusement! (*Shouts*). So now, hearties, all you have to do is to club your sticks, and fancy yourselves at Ballinasloe; and never heed me if we havn't a nice comfortable fight of it."

Rude as was this rhetoric, it touched the domestic spring of their hearts, and my patriotic promises did not produce half such a roar of delight as followed it.

Silence was but just restored, when I beheld, from my turret, our enemies advancing in vast numbers across the common. I confess my heart sank at the sight; but I soon called to mind the courage of the feudal heroines, and recollected that I was in no personal danger myself. Then, the greatness of the cause animating me with ardour, I exclaimed :

"Lo! yonder come our enemies-

To arms, to arms! Sound the tocsin; blow, blow the horn!"

A vassal blew the horn.

The warden then stationed his men in front of the gateway, which was the only vulnerable entrance into the castle; and my body-guards, holding huge stones, stood forward on the battlements. All was ready. I trembled with agitation.

And now the foe, having approached within fifty paces, halted to reconnoitre. The traitor Montmorenci, divested of his armour, commanded them in person. Betterton was seen on horseback at a distance; and the troops themselves, about sixty in number, stood brandishing stakes, bludgeons, and poles. As my men were not more than fifty in all, I looked round, with anxious expectation, for

the succours promised by Susan ; but no sign of them appeared.

Montmorenci now began to form his troops into a compact phalanx, with the poles and stakes in front ; evidently for the purpose of piercing our line, and forcing the gateway. Jerry, therefore, called in his wings, and strengthened the centre. He then desired those in the turret to direct all their stones against the foremost rank of the foe.

“Soldiers,” cried I, “listen to my last commands. The moment you shall hear the horn sound again, whether in the midst of conquest, or of defeat, hurry back to the gateway, and draw up just as you stand at present ; for while you are fighting at a distance, my castle may be taken by surprise, unless I secure prompt assist-

ance. And now, my brave fellows, success attend your arms !”

As I spoke, the foe began advancing at a rapid rate : my troops awaited them with firmness ; and when they had approached within fifteen paces of the castle, I gave the word to my bodyguards, who hurled several vollies of stones in quick succession. Some of the foremost rank were staggered by them ; two behind fell, and amidst the confusion, in rushed my troops with a tremendous shout. Thick pressed the throng of waving heads, and loud grew the clamour of voices, and the clatter of staffs ; while the wielded weapons appeared and disappeared, like fragments of a wreck on the tossing surges. For some moments both armies fought in one unbroken mass ; those struggling to gain the gateway, these to prevent them. But soon, as two streams

rushing from opposite mountains, and meeting in the valley, broaden into a lake, and run off in little rivulets; so the contending ranks, after the first encounter, began to spread by degrees, and scatter over the plain. And now they were seen intermingled with each other, and fighting man to man. Here a small wing of my brave troops, hemmed in on all sides, were defending themselves with incredible fury. There a larger division of them were maintaining a doubtful contest: while a few straggling vassals, engaged in single combat, at a distance, were driving their antagonists before them.

At this juncture, Montmorenci, with a chosen band that he kept round his person, had attacked the warden, and a few who fought by his side. These performed prodigies of valour; but at last, overpowered by numbers,

they were beginning to retire, covered with glory, when I dispatched four of my body-guards, as a corpse of reserve, to their assistance. They rushed upon the chosen band, and checked its career. It soon received reinforcements, and again pressed forward. I sent out the minstrel and another vassal; and again its progress was checked.

But now my castle had but a single defender: our foes were drawing frightfully near; and if they could once turn our flank, they would gain the turret, and make me their prisoner. This was the great crisis. A moment more, and all might be lost.

“Blow, blow the horn!” cried I.

The vassal blew the horn.

At the signal, I see my dispersed troops come pouring from all quarters towards the castle. They reach the

gateway, halt, and form a front before it. The foe, who had followed them in a confused manner, seeing them on a sudden so formidable, stop short.

“ Let the body-guards come into the castle!” cried I.

The body-guards obeyed.

“ Now, soldiers,” cried I to the rest, “ if you rush upon the foe before they can collect again, and keep in a body with your captain, the day is our own. “ Spring on them like lions! Away, away!”

The whole army shouted, and burst forward in a mass. Jerry led the van. Montmorenci with his sacred squadron fled before them. They pursued, overtook the fugitives, and after a short skirmish, made the whole detachment prisoners; while the remainder, scattered in all directions, stood at

a distance, and dared not advance. Never was a more decisive victory. My brave veterans marched back in triumph with eight captives; and then halting at the gateway, gave three cheers.

Palpitating with transport, I commanded that the prisoners' hands should be tied behind their backs, and that they should be confined in the northern tower, with sentinels over them.

As for Lord Montmorenci, his rank entitled him to more respect; so I ordered the warden to conduct him up to the Black Chamber.

I stood in the midst of my guards to receive him; and if ever grandeur and suavity were blended in one countenance, it was in mine, at that glorious moment.

"My lord," said I, "victory, which

so long hovered over the field with doubtful wing, has at last descended on my legions, and crowned the scale of justice with the laurel of triumph. But though it has also put the person and the fate of the hostile chieftain in my hands, think not I mean to use my power with harshness. Within these walls your lordship shall experience the kindest treatment; but beyond them you must not be permitted to go, till my rights are re-established and my rebellious vassals restored to their allegiance."

"Fal la la, la la la," said his lordship, stepping a minuet.

"Pinion him hand and foot!" cried I, quite disgusted and enraged. "I will have no minuets in this castle."

"That I will do," cried Jerry, "for his feet are nimble enough at making off. Though he talks big, he runs

fast. The creature is all voice and legs, like a grasshopper."

Just as the minstrel and warden had secured his wrists and ankles with a handkerchief, a vassal came to tell me that a number of men, and a girl at their head, were running towards the castle.

"I thought she would not disappoint me!" cried I, as I hastened down to meet her. It was, indeed, Susan herself, and a train of youths. I stood at the gateway ready to receive her, and trembling with terror, lest Betterton and the routed remains of his army, who were now consulting together at some distance, should intercept her.

These fears were not at all lessened when I saw her stop, as she arrived amongst them, and converse with them some time. I made my men

hold themselves in readiness to support her, and we shouted to her with all our might. But just judge of my consternation, when I beheld her and her party enrolling themselves in the hostile ranks, and the whole allied force preparing to pour down upon us! I stood horror-struck. Her ingratitude, her perfidy, were incredible.

But I had no time for moral reflection. My own glory and the interests of my people demanded all my thoughts. What was I to do? We had taken but eight prisoners, and these too would require a strong guard; while the traitorous Susan had brought a reinforcement of twenty men to the foe; so that to contend against such superior numbers in the field would be madness.

I determined therefore to draw all my troops and all my prisoners into the eastern turret, and to stand a re-

gular siege; for, as we had a large stock of provisions, we might hold out several days. In the mean time our enemies, tired of such a protracted mode of warfare, and having other occupations of more importance, would probably retire and leave us in quiet possession.

This plan was put into instant execution. I had the prisoners placed in the Black Chamber, with a numerous guard; and I made the remainder of my soldiery man the battlements.

These arrangements were but just completed, when I beheld our formidable opponents advancing in line, with Betterton, on horseback, at their head. Again my men armed themselves with stones; again the horn was sounded; again three cheers were given.

When the besiegers had arrived within forty paces of us, they halted.

Then Betterton, waving a white handkerchief, advanced under the walls, and spoke thus :

“ Lady Cherubina De Willoughby, I demand of you to surrender at discretion. Refuse, and I pledge myself that in five minutes I will drive the leopard into the sea, and plant my standard on the towers of Monkton.”

“ Sir, I both refuse, and defy you. My castle is impregnable.”

“ Not to hunger, at least,” cried Betterton; “for we will turn the siege into a blockade.”

“ Yes, to hunger!” exclaimed the minstrel, flinging down half a loaf of bread, that had remained since breakfast. “ There, Sir, is a proof of it, deduced from the Roman history !”

“ As I perceive that war is inevitable,” said Betterton, “ I shall stand acquitted both here and hereafter for

all its consequences, by my now just going through the form of proposing a **GENERAL PACIFICATION.**"

"Pacific Ocean!" cried Jerry. "No, thank you; I have got a surfeit of that word already."

"Nay, my honest fellow——"

"Never honest-fellow me," cried Jerry: "it won't take, old boy. So bad manners to you, and that is worse than bad luck, go boil your tongue hard, like a calve's, and then it won't wag so glib and smooth;—ay, and go boil your nose white like veal too. But this I can tell you, that you will neither beat us out, nor starve us out; for we have sticks and stones, and meat and good liquor; and we will eat together, and drink together, and——"

"And sleep together, I suppose," cried Betterton: "for of course, her ladyship will think nothing of sleeping

in the same apartment with twenty or thirty men."

The fatal words fell upon me like a thunderbolt! It was, indeed, too true, that a large portion of my troops must remain all night in the Black Chamber, as there would be no room for them elsewhere: so how in the name of wonder could I contrive to sleep? Certain it is, that Ellena Di Rosalba travelled a whole day and night in a carriage with two ruffians, who never left her for a moment; and it was not till after Luxima and the missionary had journeyed together several entire days, that (to quote the very words) *for the first time since the commencement of their pilgrimage she was hidden from his view*. How these heroines managed I know not; but this I know, that I could not abide the idea of sleeping in the presence of men. And yet, to sur-

render my sweet, my beloved, my venerable castle, the hereditary seat of my proud progenitors, at the moment of an immortal victory, ere the laurel was yet warmed on the throbbings of my forehead;—and all for what? For the most pitiful and unclassical reason that ever disgraced a human creature. Why, I should be pointed at, scouted at. “Look, look, there is the heroine who surrendered her castle, because—” and then a whisper and a titter, and a “’Tis fact ’pon my honour.” Oh, my friend, my friend, the thought was madness!

I considered, and reconsidered, but every moment only strengthened me more and more in the conviction that there was no remedy.

“Jerry,” said I, “dear Jerry, we must surrender.”

“Surrender!” exclaimed Jerry.

“ Why then, death alive, for what?”

“ Because,” answered I, “ my modesty would prevent me from sleeping before so many men.”

“ Poo,” cried he, “ do as I do. Have too much modesty to shew your modesty. Sleep? By my soul you shall sleep, and snore too, if you have a mind. Sleep? Sure, can’t you pin the curtains round, so that we shan’t see you? Sleep? Sure, how did the ladies manage on board the packet that I came over in? Sleep—sleep—sleep? O murder. I believe we must surrender, sure enough. O murder, murder, ’tis all over with us? For now that I think of it, we shan’t have even room to lie down you know.”

“ This is a sad affair,” said I to the minstrel. “ Can you devise no remedy?”

“ None,” said the minstrel, blushing through his very eyeballs.

“ Well,” cried Betterton, “ is the council of war over?”

“ Yes, Sir,” said I, “ and I consent to conclude a peace.”

“ I thought you would,” cried Betterton ; “ so now for the terms.”

After much altercation, these articles (written by Betterton, with his pencil, and signed by him and the warden, who went down for the purpose) were agreed upon by the contending powers.

Art. 1.

All the prisoners, at present in the castle, shall be forthwith released.

Art. 2.

The troops of the contending powers shall consign their arms into the hands of the respective leaders.

Art. 3.

The commandant of the besieged army shall evacuate the castle, at the

head of his men, and take a northerly direction; and at the same moment the commandant of the besieging army shall lead his forces in a southerly direction.

Art. 4.

The Lady Cherubina De Willoughby shall depart from the castle as soon as both armies are out of sight; and she shall not hold communication, direct or indirect, with the warden, for the space of twenty-four hours.

Art. 5.

The minstrel, Higginson, shall be permitted to remain with the Lady Cherubina, as her escort.

(Signed) BETTERTON.
SULLIVAN.

While Betterton returned to his army, for the purpose of announcing the peace, I fixed with Jerry to meet

him in London at the expiration of twenty-four hours.

I now perceived Susan running towards the castle, with all her men ; and as soon as she got under the walls, she cried :

“ No peace ; no peace ; but bloody, bloody war ! Come down here, you wretch with the steel bonnet, till I tear your eyes out ;—you special babe of hell, that robbed me of the only friend I had on earth !” And she ran on with the most horrible imprecations, and vows of vengeance.

“ Arrah, and is that Susy ?” cried one of my men, leaning over the battlements.

“ Patick O’Brien !” exclaimed she. “ Oh ! Patrick, Patrick, are you so faithless as to be taking part with my mortal enemy ?”

“ I am taking part with my country-

men," cried Patrick; "and we have just made a peace; so by gog, if you break it, 'tis yourself will be my mortal innimy!"

"Dear, dear Patrick!" said she, "don't let that vile woman decoy you from me, and I will do whatever you desire."

"Then I desires you to go back this moment," said Patrick.

Susan retired to the main body, without uttering a word.

The several articles were then executed in due form. The prisoners were liberated: the soldiers on both sides laid down their arms. I distributed all my remaining money amongst my men: they thanked me with a shout; and then, headed by the warden, issued from the castle. At the same time, Betterton and his party marched off *the field*.

When Jerry had got almost out of sight, he halted his men, faced them towards the castle, and all gave three last cheers. I waved my handkerchief, and cried like a child.

I then took a tender leave of my dear Black Chamber; and with a heavy heart, and a tardy step, departed from my castle, till better days should enable me to revisit it. I proceeded with the minstrel to the poor woman's cottage, whence I now write; and I have just dispatched him for a chaise, as I shall return to London immediately.

My heart is almost broken.

Adieu.

LETTER XL.

MS.

O YE, WHOEVER YE ARE, WHOM CHANCE OR MISFORTUNE MAY HERE-AFTER CONDUCT TO THIS SPOT, TO YOU I SPEAK, TO YOU REVEAL THE STORY OF MY WRONGS, AND ASK YOU TO REVENGE THEM. VAIN HOPE! YET IT IMPARTS SOME COMFORT TO BELIEVE, THAT WHAT I NOW WRITE MAY ONE DAY MEET THE EYE OF A FELLOW-CREATURE; THAT THE WORDS WHICH TELL MY SUFFERINGS MAY ONE DAY DRAW PITY FROM THE FEELING HEART.

KNOW THEN, THAT ON THE NIGHT OF THE FATAL DAY WHICH SAW ME DRIVEN FROM MY CASTLE, BY RUTH-

LESS FOES, FOUR MEN IN BLACK VISAGES, RUSHED INTO THE COTTAGE WHERE I HAD TAKEN SHELTER, BORE ME FROM IT, AND FORCED ME AND MY MINSTREL INTO A CARRIAGE. WE TRAVELLED MILES IN IMPENETRABLE SILENCE. AT LENGTH THEY STOPPED, CAST A CLOAK OVER MY FACE, AND CARRIED ME IN THEIR ARMS, ALONG WINDING PASSAGES, AND UP AND DOWN FLIGHTS OF STEPS. THEY THEN TOOK OFF THE CLOAK, AND I FOUND MYSELF IN AN ANTIQUE AND GOTHIC APARTMENT. MY CONDUCTORS LAID DOWN A LAMP, AND DISAPPEARED. I HEARD THE DOOR BARRED UPON ME. O SOUND OF DESPAIR! O MOMENT OF UNUTTERABLE ANGUISH! SHUT OUT FROM DAY, FROM FRIENDS, FROM LIFE—IN THE PRIME OF MY YEARS, IN THE HEIGHT OF MY

TRANSGRESSIONS, — I SINK UNDER
THE —————

* * * * *

* ALMOST AN HOUR HAS NOW PASSED
IN SOLITUDE AND SILENCE. WHY AM I
BROUGHT HITHER? WHY CONFINED
THUS RIGOROUSLY? THE HORRORS OF
DEATH ARE BEFORE MY EYES. O DIRE
EXTREMITY! O STATE OF LIVING DEATH!
IS THIS A VISION? ARE THESE THINGS
REAL? ALAS, I AM BEWILDERED.

* * * * *

Such, Biddy, was the manuscript
that I scribbled last night, after the
mysterious event which it relates.
You shall now hear the particulars of
all that has occurred to me since.

After the ruffians had departed, and I
had rallied my spirits, I took up the

lamp, and began examining the chamber. It was spacious, and the feeble light that I carried could but just penetrate it. Part of the walls were hidden with historical arras, worked in colourless and rotten worsted, which depicted scenes from the Provençal Romances; the deeds of Charlemagne and his twelve peers; the Crusaders, Troubadours, and Saracens; and the Necromantic feats of the Magician Jurl. The walls were wainscotted with black larchwood; and over the painted and escutcheoned windows hung iron visors, tattered pennons, and broken shields. An antique bed of decayed damask, with a lofty tester, stood in a corner; and a few grand moth-eaten chairs, tissued and fringed with threads of tarnished gold, were round the room. At the farther end, a picture of a soldier on horse-

back, darting his spear upon a man, who held up his hands in a supplicating attitude, was enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that reached down to the ground. An old harp, which occupied one corner, proved imprisonment, and some clots of blood upon the floor proved murder.

I gazed with delight at this admirable apartment. It was a perfect treasure: nothing could be more complete: all was in the best style of horror; and now, for the first time, I felt the full consciousness of being as real a heroine as ever existed.

I then indulged myself with imagining the frightful scenes I should undergo here. Such attempts to murder me, such ghosts, such mysteries! figures flitting in the dusty perspective, quick steps along the corridor, groans, and an *ill-minded* lord of the castle.

In the midst of this pleasing reverie, methought I heard a step approaching. It stopped at the door, the bolts were undrawn, and an antiquated waiting-woman, in fardingale, ruffles, flounces, and flowered silk, bustled into the room.

“My lord,” said she, “desires me to let your ladyship know that he will do himself the honour of waiting on you in half-an-hour.”

“Tell your lord,” said I, “that I shall be ready to receive him: but pray, my good woman,” said I, “what is the name of your lord?”

“Good woman!” cried she, bridling up; “no more good woman than yourself: Dame Ursulina, if you please.”

“Well then, Dame Ursulina, what is his name?”

“The Baron Hildebrand,” answered she. “The only feudal chieftain left in *England*.”

“ And what is the name of his castle?”

“ Gogmagog,” answered she: “ and it is situated in the Black Forest of Grodolphon, whose oaks are coeval with the reign of Brute.”

“ And, alas!” cried I, “ why have I been seized? Why thus imprisoned? Why——”

The Dame laid her finger across her lips, and grinned volumes of mystery.

“ At least, tell me,” said I, with a searching look, “ how comes that blood on the floor; for it appears but just spilt?”

“ Lauk!” cried she, “ that blood is there these fifty years. Sure your ladyship has often read in romances of blood on floors, and daggers, that looked as fresh as a daisy at the end of centuries. But, alas-o-day! modern blood won't keep like the good old blood.

Ay, ay, ay; the times have degenerated in every thing;—even in harps. Look at that harp yonder: I warrant 'tis in excellent tune at this moment, albeit no human finger has touched it these ten years: and your ladyship must remember reading of other cobwebbed harps in old castles, that required no tuning-hammer, after lying by whole ages. But, indeed, they do say, that the ghost keeps this harp in order, by playing on it o' nights."

"The ghost!" exclaimed I.

"Ay, by my fackins," said she; "sure this is the haunted chamber of the northern tower; and such sights and noises—Santa Catharina of Sienna, and St. Bridget, and San Pietro, and Santa Benedicta, and St. Radagunda, defend me!"

Then, aspirating an ejaculation, she *hastily* hobbled out of the room, and

locked the door after her, without giving me farther satisfaction.

However, the visit from Baron Hildebrand occupied my mind more than the ghost ; and I sat expecting it with great anxiety. At last, I heard a heavy tread along the corridor : the door was unbarred, and a huge, but majestic figure, strode into the chamber. The black plume towering on his cap, the armorial coat, Persian sash, and Spanish cloak, conspiring with the most muscular frown imaginable, made him look truly tremendous.

As he flung himself into a chair, he cast a Schedoniac scowl at me ; while I felt, that one glance from the corner of a villain's eye is worth twenty straight-forward looks from an honest man. My heart throbbed audible, my bosom heaved like billows : I threw into my features a conventual smile,

and stood before him, in all the silence of despair, something between Niobe, patience, and a broken lily.

“ Lady!” cried he, with a voice that vibrated through my brain ; “ I am the Baron Hildebrand, that celebrated ruffian. My plans are terrible and unsearchable. Hear me.

“ My daughter, the Lady Sympathina, though long betrothed to the Marquis De Furioso, has long been enamoured of the Lord Montmorenci. In vain have I tried entreaties and imprecations : nothing will induce her to relinquish him ; even though he has himself confessed to her that you reign sole tormentress of his heart.

“ While doubtful what course to take, I heard, from my vassals, of your having seized on a neighbouring castle, and of Montmorenci’s being there with you. The moment was too precious

to be lost. I planted armed spies about the castle, with orders to make you and him prisoners the first opportunity. These orders are executed, and his lordship is a captive in the western turret.

“Now, Madam, you must already guess my motive for having taken this step. It is to secure your immediate marriage with his lordship, and thus to terminate for ever my daughter’s hopes, and my own inquietude. In two days, therefore, be prepared to give him your hand, or to suffer imprisonment for life.”

“My lord,” said I, “I am a poor, weak, timid girl, but yet not unmindful of my noble lineage. I cannot consent to disgrace it. My lord, I will not wed Montmorenci.”

“You will not?” cried he, starting from his seat.

“ I will not,” said I, in a tone of the sweetest obstinacy.

“ Insolent !” exclaimed he, and began to pace the chamber with prodigious strides. Conceive the scene ;— the tall figure of Hildebrand passing along, with folded arms ; the hideous desolation of the room, and my shrinking figure. It was great, very great. It resembled a Pandemonium, where an angel of light was tormented by a fiend. Yet insult and oppression had but added to my charms, as the rose throws forth fresh fragrance by being mutilated.

On a sudden he stopped short before me.

“ What is your reason for refusing to marry him ?” said he.

“ My lord,” answered I, “ I do not feel for his lordship the passion of love.”

“Love!” cried he, with yells of laughter. “Why this is Sympathine’s silly rhodomontade. Love! There is no such passion. But mark me, Madam : soon shall you learn that there is such a passion as revenge!” And with these words he rushed out of the chamber.

Nothing could be better than my conduct on this occasion. I was delighted with it, and with the castle, and with every thing. I therefore knelt and chaunted a vesper hymn, so soft, and so solemn ; while my eyes, like a magdalen’s, were cast to the planets.

Adieu.

LETTER XLI.

I HAD flung myself on the bed : my lamp was extinguished ; and now sleep

began to pour its opiate over me, when, (terrible to tell!) me thought I heard steps stealing through my very chamber.

“She sleeps,” whispered a voice.

“Then poniard her at once,” said another.

“Remember, I must have five ducats,” said the first.

“Four,” said the second: “Gruffan, the tormentor of innocents, would charge but two.”

“Then I will betray the murder.”

“I will take good care you shall not.”

“How so?”

“I will assassinate you after it.”

“Diavolo! 'Tis prudent, however. But by St. Jago, I will not consent to be assassinated under a ducat a-piece to my children.”

“Well, you shall have them.”

“Then, Moestro mio illustrissimo, the Bravo Abellino is your povero devotissimo!”

The next instant my stained eyeballs saw a figure half starting from behind the tattered arras, in a long cloak, and flat cap. His right hand held a dagger, and his left a dark lantern, that cast a yellow glare on the ruffianly sculpture of his visage.

I screamed;—but sorry am I to say, less like a heroine than a sea gull;—and the bravo advanced. On a sudden, the door of the chamber was burst open, and Montmorenci rushed forward, with a brandished sword. At the same moment, Baron Hildebrand sprang from behind the tapestry.

“Turn, villain!” cried Montmorenci; and a desperate battle began.

My life was the stake. I hung upon every blow, winced as the steel de-

cended on Montmorenci, and moved as he moved, with agonised mimicry.

At length, victory declared in his favour. The bandit lay lifeless, and the baron was disarmed; but escaped out of the chamber.

“Let us fly!” cried my preserver, snatching me to his heart. “I have bribed a domestic.—A horse is in waiting.—Let us fly!”

“Let us, let us!” said I, disengaging myself.

“Yet hold!” cried he. “I have saved your life. Save mine, by consenting to an immediate union.”

“Ay, my lord——”

“What?”

“I cannot.”

“Cannot!”

“Come, my lord; do come!”

“On my knees, lady——”

“Seize the villain, and immure him in the deepest dungeon!” exclaimed

the baron, rushing into the room with his domestics.

Some of them laid hold on Montmorenci, the rest bore off the body of the bandit. The baron and I were left alone.

“ My lord,” said I, flinging myself at his feet (for alas, I had now lost all my magnanimity), “ that man is my horror and detestation. But only promise to spare my life for one day more, and indeed, indeed, I will try if I can make up my mind to marry him.”

“ ’Tis well,” said the baron. “ To-night you sleep secure: to-morrow decides your fate.”

He spoke, and stalked out of the chamber.


This horrid castle—would I had never set foot in it. I will escape if I can, I am resolved. I have already tried the walls, for a sliding pannel or

a concealed door; but nothing of the kind can I discover. And yet something of the kind there must be, else how could the baron and bravo have entered my chamber? I protest this facility of intrusion in antique apartments is extremely distressing. For besides its exposing one to be murdered, just think how it exposes one to be peeped at. I declare I dare not even undress, lest some menial should be leering through a secret crevice. Oh, that I were once more in the mud cottage! I am sick of castles.

Adieu.

LETTER XLII.

THIS morning, after a maid had cleaned out the room, Dame Ursulina brought breakfast.



“ Graciousnessosity !” cried she, “ here is the whole castle in such a fluster ; hammering and clamouring, and paddling at all manner of possets, to make much of the fine company that is coming down to the baron to-day.”

“ Heavens !” exclaimed I, “ when will my troubles cease ? Doubtless they are a most dissolute set. An amorous Verezzi, an insinuating Cavigni, and an abandoned Orsino ; besides some lovely voluptuary, some fascinating desperado, who plays the harp, and poisons by the hour.”

“ La, not at all,” said the dame. “ We shall have none but old Sir Charles Grandison, and his lady, Miss Harriet Byron, that was ;—old Mr. Mortimer Delville, and his lady, Miss Cecilia, that was ;—and old Lord Mortimer, and his lady, Miss Amanda, that was.”

“ Can it be possible ? ” cried I. “ Why these are all heroes and heroines ! ”

“ Pon my conversation, and by my fig, and as I am a true maiden, so they are,” said she ; “ for my lord scorns any other sort of varment. And we shall have such tickling and pinching ; and fircumdandying, and cherrybrandying, and the genteel poison of bad wine ; and the warder blowing his horn, and the baron in his scowered armour, and I in a coif plaited high with ribbons all about it, and in the most rustling silk I have. And Philip, the butler, meets me in the dark. “ Oddsboddikins,” says he (for that is his pet oath), “ mayhap I should know the voice of that silk ? ” “ Oddspittikins,” says I, “ peradventure thou should’st ; ” and then he catches me round the neck, and ——”

“There, there!” cried I, “you distract me.”

“Marry come up!” muttered she. “Some people think some people—Marry come up, quotha!” And she flounced out of the room.

I sat down to breakfast, astonished at what I had just heard. Harriet Byron, Cecilia, Amanda, and their respective consorts, all alive and well! Oh, could I get but one glimpse of them, speak ten words with them, I should die content. I pictured them to myself, adorned with all the venerable loveliness of a virtuous old age,—even in greyness engaging, even in wrinkles interesting. Hand in hand they walk down the gentle slope of life, and often pause to look back upon the scenes that they have passed—the happy vale of their childhood, the turretted castle, the cloistered monastery.

This reverie was interrupted by the return of Dame Ursulina.

“The baron,” said she, “has just gone off to London; we think either for the purpose of consulting physicians about his periodical madness, or of advising government to propose a peace with France. So my young mistress, the Lady Sympathina, is anxious to visit you during his absence,—as he prohibited her;—and she has sent me to request that you will honor her with your permission.”

“Tell her I shall be most happy to see and to solace a lady of her miseries,” answered I. “And I trust we shall swear an eternal friendship when we meet.”

“Friendship,” said the dame, “is the soft soother of human cares. O, to see two fair females sobbing respondent, while their blue eyes shine

through their tears like hyacinths bathed in the dews of the morning!"

"Why, dame," cried I, "how did you manage to pick up such a charming sentiment, and such elegant language?"

"Marry come up!" said she, "I haven't lived, not I, not with heroines, not for nothing. Marry come up, quotha!" And this frumpish old woman sailed out of the chamber in a great fume.

I now prepared for an interview of congenial souls; not was I long kept in suspense. Hardly had the dame disappeared, when the door opened again, and a tall, thin, lovely girl, flew into the room. She stopped opposite me. Her yellow ringlets hung round her pale face like a mist round the moon. Again she advanced, took both my hands, and stood gazing on my features.

“ Ah, what wonder,” said she, “ that Montmorenci should be captivated by these charms ! No, I will not, cannot take him from you. He is your’s, my friend. Marry him, and leave me to the solitude of a cloister.”

“ Never !” cried I. “ Ah, madam, ah, Sympathina, your magnanimity amazes, transports me. No, my friend ; your’s he shall, he must be ; for you love him, and I hate him.”

“ Hate him !” cried she ; “ and wherefore ? Ah, what a form is his, and ah, what a face ! Locks like the spicy cinnamon ; eyes half dew, half lightning ; lips like a casket of jewels, loveliest when open ——”

“ And teeth like the Sybil’s books,” said I ; “ for two of them are wanting.”

“ Ah,” cried she, “ this I am informed is your reason for not marrying him ; as if his charms less than his

teeth, like Sampson's strength in his hair."

"Upon my honor," said I, "I would not marry him, if he had five hundred teeth. But you, my friend, you shall marry him, in spite of his teeth."

"Ah," cried she, "and see my father torture you to death?"

"It were not torture," said I, "to save you from it."

"It were double torture," cried she, "to be saved by your's."

"Justice," said I, "demands the sacrifice."

"Generosity," said she, "would spare the victim."

"Is it generosity," said I, "to wed me with one I hate?"

"Is it justice," said she, "to wed me with one who hates me?"

"Ah, my friend," cried I, "you may requish me in Antithetical and

Gallican repartee, but never shall you conquer me in sentimental magnanimity."

"Let us then swear an eternal friendship," cried she.

"I swear!" said I.

"I swear!" said she.

We rushed into each other's arms.

"And now," cried she, when the first transports had subsided, "how do you like being a heroine?"

"Above all things in the world," said I.

"And how do you get on at the profession?" asked she.

"It is not for me to say," replied I.

"Only this, that ardor and assiduity are not wanting on my part."

"Of course then," said she, "you shine in all the requisite qualities. Do you blush well?"

"As well as can be expected," said I.

“ Because,” said she, “ blushing is my chief beauty. I blush one tint and three-fourths with joy; two tints, including forehead and bosom, with modesty; and four with love, to the points of my fingers. My father once blushed me against the dawn for a tattered banner to a rusty poniard.”

“ And who won?” said I.

“ It was play or pay,” replied she; “ and the morning happened to be misty, so there was no sport in that way; but I fainted, which was just as good, if not better. Are you much addicted to fainting?”

“ A little,” said I.

“ ’Pon hónor?”

“ Well, ma’am, to be honest with you, I am afraid I have never fainted yet; but at a proper opportunity I flatter myself ——”

“ Now, love,” said she, “ do not be

distressed about the matter. If you weep well, 'tis a good substitute. Do you weep well?"

"Extremely well, indeed," said I.

"Come then," cried she, "we will weep on each other's necks." And she flung her arms about me. We remained some moments in motionless endearment.

"Are you weeping?" said she, at length.

"No, ma'am," answered I.

"Ah, why don't you?" said she.

"I can't, ma'am," said I; "I can't."

"Ah, do," said she.

"Upon my word, I can't," said I: "sure I am trying all I can. But, bless me, how desperately you are crying. Your tears are running down my bosom like a torrent, and boiling hot too. Excuse me, ma'am, but you will give me my death of cold."

“ Ah, my fondling,” said she, raising herself from my neck ; “ tears are my sole consolation. Ofttimes I sit and weep, I know not why ; and then I weep to find myself weeping. Then, when I can weep, I weep at having nothing to weep at ; and then, when I have something to weep at, I weep that I cannot weep at it. This very morning I bumped a tulip with my tears, while reading a dainty ditty that I must now repeat to you.

“ The moon had just risen, as a maid parted from her lover. A sylph was pursuing her sigh through the deserts of air, bathing in its warmth, and inhaling its odours. As he flew over the ocean, he saw a sea-nymph sitting on the shore, and singing the fate of a shipwreck, that appeared at a distance, with broken masts, and floating rudder. Her in-

strument was her own long and blue tresses, which she had strung across rocks of coral. The sparkling spray struck them, and made sweet music. He saw, he loved, he hovered over her. But invisible, how could he attract her eyes? Incorporeal, how could he touch her? Even his voice could not be heard by her amidst the dashing of the waves, and the melody of her ringlets. The sylphs, pitying his miserable state, exiled him to a bower of woodbine. There he sits, dips his pen of moonshine in the subtle dew ere it falls, and writes his love on the bell of a silver lily."

This charming tale led us to talk of moonshine. We moralized on the uncertainty of it, and of life; discussed sighs, and agreed that they were charming things; enumerated the various kinds of tresses—flaxen, golden, ches-

nut, amber, sunny, jetty, caroty; and I suggested two new epithets,—sorrel hair and narcissine hair. Such a flow of soul never was.

At last she rose to depart.

“Now, my love,” said she, “I am in momentary expectation of Sir Charles Grandison, Mortimer Delville, and Lord Mortimer, with their amiable wives. Will you permit them, during the baron’s absence, to spend an hour with you this evening? They will not betray us. I shall be proud of shewing you to them, and you will receive much delight and edification from their society.”

I grasped at the proposal with eagerness; she flitted out of the chamber with a promissory smile; and I was so charmed, that I began frisking about, and snapping my fingers, in a most indecorous manner.

What an angel is this Sympathina !
Her face has the contour of a Madona,
with the sensibility of a Magdalen.
Her voice is soft as the last accents of
a dying maid. Her language is engag-
ing, her oh is sublime, and her ah is
beautiful.

Adieu.

LETTER XLIII.

TOWARDS night I heard the sound
of several steps approaching the cham-
ber. The bolts were undrawn, and
Lady Sympathina, at the head of the
company, entered, and announced their
names.

“ Bless me !” said I, involuntarily ;
for such a set of objects never were
seen.

Sir Charles Grandison came forward

the first. He was an emaciated old oddity in flannels and a flowing wig. He bowed over my hand, and kissed it—his old custom, you know.

Lady Grandison leaned on his arm, bursting with fat and laughter, and so unlike what I had conceived of Harriet Byron, that I turned from her in disgust.

Mortimer Delville came next; and my disappointment at finding him a plain, sturdy, hard-featured fellow, was soon absorbed in my still greater regret at seeing his Cecilia,—once the blue-eyed, sun-tressed Cecilia,—now flaunting in all the reverend graces of a painted grandmother, and leering most roguishly.

After them, Lord Mortimer and his Amanda advanced; but he had fallen into flesh; and she, with a face like scorched parchment, appeared both *broken-hearted* and *broken-winded*;

such a perpetual sighing and wheezing did she keep.

I was too much shocked and disappointed to speak ; but Sir Charles soon broke silence ; and after the most tedious sentence of compliment that I had ever heard, he thus continued :

“ Your ladyship may recollect I have always been celebrated for giving advice. Let me then advise you to relieve yourself from your present embarrassment, by marrying Lord Montmorenci. It seems you do not love him. For that very reason marry him. Trust me, love before marriage is the surest preventive of love after it. Heroes and heroines exemplify the proposition. Why do their biographers always conclude the book just at their wedding ? Simply because all beyond it is unhappiness and hatred.”

“ Surely, Sir Charles,” said I, “ you



must be mistaken. Their biographers (who have such admirable information, that they can even tell the thoughts and actions of dying personages, when not a soul is near them), these always end the book with declaring that the connubial lives of their heroes and heroines are like unclouded skies, or unruffled streams, or summer all the year through, or some gentle simile or other."

"That is all irony," replied Sir Charles. "But I know most of these heroes and heroines myself; and I know that nothing can equal their misery."

"Do you know Lord Orville and his Evelina?" said I; "and are not they happy?"

"Happy!" cried he, laughing. "Have you really never heard of their notorious misfs? Why it was but yea-

terday that she flogged him with a boiled leg of mutton, because he had sent home no turnips."

"Astonishment!" exclaimed I. "And she, when a girl, so meek."

"Ay, there it is," said he. "One has never seen a white foal or a cross girl; but often white horses and cross wives. Let me advise you against white horses."

"But pray," said I, addressing Amanda, "is not your brother Oscar happy with his Adela?"

"Alas, no," cried she. "Oscar became infatuated with the charms of Evelina's old governess, Madam Duval; so poor Adela absconded; and she, who was once the soul of mirth, has now grown a confirmed methodist; curls a sacred sneer at gaiety, loves canting and decanting, piety and *eau de vie*. In short, the devil is very

busy about her, though she sometimes drives him away with a thump of the Bible."

"Well, Rosa, the gentle beggar-girl, —what of her?" said I.

"Eloped with one Corporal Trim," answered Sir Charles.

"How shocking!" cried I. "But Pamela, the virtuous Pamela?"—

"Made somewhat a better choice," said Sir Charles; "for she ran off with Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, when he returned to the happy valley."

"Dreadful accounts, indeed!" said I.

"So dreadful," said Sir Charles, bowing over my hand, "that I trust they will determine you to marry Montmorenci. 'Tis true, he has lost two teeth, and you do not love him; but was not Walstein a cripple? And did not Caroline of Lichfield fall in love

with him after their marriage, though she had hated him before it?"

"Recollect," cried Cecilia, "what perils environ you here. The baron is the first murderer of the age."

"Look at yonder blood," cried old Mortimer Delville.

"Remember the bandit last night," cried old Lord Mortimer.

"Think of the tremendous spectre that haunts this apartment," cried Lady Grandison.

"And above all," cried the Lady Sympathina, "bear in mind that this chamber may be the means of your waking some morning with a face like a pumpkin."

"Heavens!" exclaimed I, "what do you mean? My face like a pumpkin?"

"Yes," said she. "The dampness of the room would swell it up like a pumpkin in a single night."

“ Oh !” ladies and gentlemen,” cried I, dropping on my knees, “ you see what shocking horrors surround me here. Oh ! let me beseech of you to pity and to rescue me. Surely, surely you might aid me in escaping !”

“ It is out of the nature of possibilities,” said Lady Sympathina.

“ At least, then,” cried I, “ you might use your influence to have me removed from this vile room, that feels like a well.”


“ Fly !” cried Dame Ursulina, running in breathless. “ The baron has just returned, and is searching for you all. And he has already been through the chapel, and armoury, and gallery; and the west tower, and east tower, and south tower; and the cedar chamber, and oaken chamber, and black chamber, and the grey, brown, yellow, green, pale pink, sky blue; and every

shade, tinge, and tint of chamber in the whole castle. Benedicite, Santa Maria; how the times have degenerated! Come, come, come."

The guests vanished, the door was barred, and I remained alone.

I sat ruminating in sad earnest, on the necessity for my consenting to this hateful match; when (and I protest to you, I had not thought it was more than nine o'clock), a terrible bell, which I never heard before, tolled, with an appalling reverberation, that rang through my whole frame, the frightful hour of ONE!

At the same moment I heard a noise; and looking towards the opposite end of the chamber, I beheld the great picture on a sudden disappear; and, standing in its stead, a tall figure, cased in blood-stained steel, and with a spectral visage, the perfect counterpart of the *baron's*.



I sat gasping. It uttered these sepulchral intonations.

"I am the spirit of the murdered Alphonso. Lord Montmorenci deserves thee. Wed him, or in two days thou liest a corpse. To-morrow night I come again."

The superhuman appearance spoke; and (oh, soothing sound) uttered a human sneeze!

"Damnation!" it muttered. "All is blown!" And immediately the picture flew back to its place.

Well, I had never heard of a ghost's sneezing before: so you may judge I soon got rid of my terror, and felt pretty certain that this was no bloodless and marrowless apparition, but the baron himself, who had adopted the ghosting system, so common in romances, for the purpose of frightening me into his schemes.

However, I had now discovered a

concealed door, and with it a chance of escape. I must tell you, that escape by the public door is utterly impracticable, as a maid always opens it for those that enter, and remains outside till they return. However, I have a plan about the private door; which, if the ghost should appear again, as it promised, is likely to succeed.

I was pondering upon this plan, when in came Dame Ursulina, taking snuff, and sneezing at a furious rate.

“By the mass,” said she, “it rejoiceth the old cockles of my heart to see your ladyship safe; for as I passed your door just now, methought I heard the ghst ”

“You might well have heard it,” said I, pretending infinite faintness, “for I have seen it; and it entered *through yonder picture.*”

“Benedicite!” cried she, “but it was a true spectre!”

“A real, downright apparition,” said I, “uncontaminated with the smallest mixture of mortality.”

“And didn’t your ladyship hear me sneeze at the door?” said she.

“I was too much alarmed to hear any thing,” answered I. “But pray have the goodness to lend me that snuff-box, as a pinch or two may revive me from my faintness.” I had my reasons for this request.

“A heroine take snuff!” cried she, laying the box on the table. “Lack-a-daisy, how the times are changed! But now, my lady, don’t be trying to move or cut that great picture; for though the ghost comes into the chamber through it, no mortal can. I know better than to let you give me the slip; and I will tell a story to prove”

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my knowledge of bolts and bars. When I was a girl, a young man lodged in the house ; and one night he stole the stick that I used to fasten the hasp and staple of my door with. Well, my mother bade me put a carrot (as there was nothing else) in its place. So I put in a carrot—for I was a dutiful daughter ; but I put in a boiled carrot—for I was a love-sick maiden. Eh, don't I understand the doctrine of bolts and bars ?”

“ You understand a great deal too much,” said I, as the withered wanton went chuckling out of the chamber.

I must now retire to rest. I do not fear being disturbed by a bravo to-night ; but I am uneasy, lest I should wake in the morning with a face like a pumpkin.

Adieu.

LETTER XLIV.

ABOUT noon the Baron Hildebrand paid me a visit, to hear, as he said, my final determination respecting my marriage with Montmorenci. I had prepared my lesson, and I told him that my mind was not yet entirely reconciled to such an event; but that it was much swayed by a most extraordinary circumstance which had occurred the night before. He desired me to relate it; and I then, with apparent agitation, recounted the particulars of the apparition, and declared that if it should come again I would endeavour to preserve my presence of mind, and enter into conversation with it; in order (as it appeared quite well informed of the picture) to learn who-

ther my marriage with his lordship would prove fortunate or otherwise. I then added, that if its answer should be favourable, I would not hesitate another moment to give him my hand.

The baron, while he could not suppress a smile, protested himself highly delighted with my determination of speaking to the spectre, and encouraged me not to fear it, as it was the most harmless creature of its kind ever known.

He then took his leave. I spent the remainder of the day reflecting on the desperate enterprise that I had planned for the night, and fortifying my mind by recalling all the hazardous escapes of other heroines.

At last the momentous hour was at hand. The lamp and snuff-box lay on the table. I sat anxious, and kept a watchful eye upon the picture.

The bell tolled one, again the picture vanished, and again the spectre stood there. Its left thumb rested upon its hip, and its right hand was held to the heavens. I sent forth a well-executed shriek, and hid my face in my hands, while it spoke these words :

“ I come to thee for the last time. Wilt thou wed Montmorenci, or wilt thou not ?—Speak.”

“ Oh ! cried I, “ if you would only promise not to do me a mischief, I have something particular to ask of you.”

“ A spirit cannot harm a mortal,” drawled out the spectre.

“ Well then,” said I, faltering and trembling.—“ Perhaps—pardon me—perhaps you would first have the goodness to walk in.”

The spectre advanced a few paces, and paused.

“ This is so kind, so condescending,” said I, “ that really—do take a chair.”

The spectre shook its head mournfully.

“ Pray do,” said I, “ you will oblige me.”

The spectre seated itself in a chair ; but atoned for the mortal act by an immortal majesty of manner,

“ As you are of another world,” said I, “ ’tis but fair to do the honours of this ; and in truth, I am not at all astonished that you apparitions should speak so harshly as you usually do, we mortals always shew such evident aversion and horror at your appearance.”

“ There is a prejudice gone forth against us,” said the spectre, with a hollow voice, “ in consequence of our coming at night, like thieves.”

“ Yes,” said I, “ at one precisely. And it has often struck me how well the clocks of old castles were kept, for they regularly struck just as the ghost appeared. Indeed, ghosts keep such late hours, that ’tis no wonder they look pale and thin. I do not recollect ever to have heard or read of a fat or a fresh-coloured phantom.”

“ Nor of a ghost wanting a limb or an eye,” said the spectre.

“ Nor of an ugly ghost,” said I bowing.

The spectre took the compliment, and bowed in return.

“ And therefore,” said the spectre, “ as spirits are always accurate resemblances of the bodies that they once inhabited, none but thin and pale persons can ever become ghosts.”

“ And by the same rule,” said I, “ none but blue-eyed and golden-haired

persons can go to heaven ; for our painters always represent angels so. I have never heard of a hazel-eyed angel, or a black-haired cherub."

" I know," said the spectre, " if angels are, as painters depict them, always sitting naked on cold clouds, I would rather live the life of a ghost, to the end of the chapter."

" And pray," cried I, " where, and how do ghosts live ?"

" Within this very globe," said the spectre. " For this globe is not, as most mortals imagine, a solid body, but a round crust about ten miles thick ; and the concave inside is furnished just like the convex outside, with wood, water, vale and mountain. In the centre stands a nice little golden sun, about the size of a pippin, and lights our internal world ; where, whatever enjoyments we loved as men, we

retain as ghosts. We banquet on visionary turtle, or play at ærial marbles, or drive a phantasmagoric four in hand. The young renew their amours, and the more aged sit yawning for the day of judgment.—But I scent the rosy air of dawn. Speak, lady; what question art thou anxious that I should expound?”

“Whether,” said I, “if I marry Lord Montmorenci, I shall be happy with him or not?”

“Blissful as Eden,” replied the spectre. “Your lives will be congenial, and your deaths simultaneous.”

“And now,” said I, walking closer to it, “will you do me the favour to take a pinch of snuff?”

“Avant!” it cried, motioning me from it with its hand.

But quick as thought, I flung the whole contents of the box full into its eyes.

“Blood and thunder!” exclaimed the astonished apparition.

I snatched the lamp, sprang through the frame of the picture, shut the concealed door, bolted it; while all the time I heard the phantom within, dancing in agony at its eyes, and sending mine to as many devils as could well be called together on so short a notice.

Thus far my venturous enterprise had prospered. I now found myself in a narrow passage, with another door at the farther end of it; and I prepared to traverse winding stairs, subterranean passages, and suites of tapestried apartments. I therefore advanced, and opened the door; but in an instant started back; for I had beheld a lighted hall, of modern architecture, with gilded balustrades, ceiling painted in fresco, Etruscan lamps, and stucco-

work ! Yes, it was a villa, or a casino, or a pallazo, or any thing you please but a castello. Amazement ! Horror ! What should I do ? whither turn ? delay would be fatal. Again I peeped. The hall was empty ; so, putting down my lamp, I stole across it to an open door, and looked through the chink. I had just time to see a Persian saloon, and in the centre a table laid for supper, when I heard several steps entering the hall. It was too late to retreat, so I sprang into the room ; and recollecting that a curtain had befriended me once before, I ran behind one which I saw there.

Instantly afterwards the persons entered. They were spruce footmen, bringing in supper. Not a scowl, not a mustachio amongst them.

As soon as the covers were laid, a *crowd* of company came laughing into

the room ; but, friend of my bosom, fancy, just fancy my revulsion of soul, my dismay, my disgust, my bitter indignation—oh ! how shall I describe to you half what I felt, when I recognised these wretches, as they entered one by one, to be the identical gang who had visited me the day before, as heroes and heroines ! I knew them instantly, though they looked twice as young ; and in the midst of them all, as blithe as larks, came Betterton himself and Lord Altamont Mortimer Montmorenci ! My heart died at the sight.

After they had seated themselves, Betterton (who sat at the head, and therefore was master) desired one of the servants to bring in “ the crazed poet.” And now two footmen appeared, carrying between them a large meal-bag, filled with Higginson ; which

they placed to the table, on a vacant seat. The bag was fastened at the top, and a slit was on the side of it.

The wretches then began to banter him, and bade him put forth his head; but he would neither move nor speak. At last they turned the conversation to me.

“ I wonder can he be ghosting her all this time ?” said Betterton.

“ Well,” cried the fellow who had personated Sir Charles Grandison, “ I ought to have played the ghost, I am so much taller than he.”

“ Not unless you could act it better than you did Grandison,” said the late Lady Sympathina. “ No, no, I was the person who performed my part well ;—pouring a vial of hot water down her neck, by way of tears; and frightening her out of her senses by talking of a face like a pumpkin !”

“Nay,” cried my Lord Montmorenci, “the best piece of acting you ever saw was when I first met her at the theatre, and persuaded her that Abraham Grundy was Lord Altamont Mortimer Montmorenci.”

“Except,” said Betterton, “when I played old Whylome Eftsoones, at the masquerade, and made her believe that Cherry Wilkinson was Lady Cherubina De Willoughby.”

I turned quite sick; but I had no time for thought, the thunderclaps came so thick upon me.

“She had some mad notions of the kind before,” said Grundy (I have done with calling him Montmorenci), “for she fancied that an old piece of parchment, part of a lease of lives, was an irrefragable proof of her being Lady De Willoughby.”

“Ay,” cried Betterton, “and of poor Wilkinson’s being her persecutor,

instead of her father ; on the strength of which vagary he lies at this moment in a madhouse."

" But," said Grundy, " her setting up for a heroine, and her affectation while imitating the manners and language that authors chuse to give their heroines, would make a tiger laugh. I vow and protest, our amorous interview, where she first told her love, was the most burlesque exhibition in nature. I am thine, and thou art mine ! whimpered the silly girl, sinking on my bosom. She now says she does not love me. Don't believe a syllable of it. Why, the poor creature could not even bridle her passion in my presence. Such hugging and kissing as she went on with, that, as I hope to be saved, I sometimes thought she would suffocate me outright."

" 'Tis false as hell !" cried I, burst-

ing into tears, and running from behind the curtain. "Upon my sacred honour, ladies and gentlemen, 'tis every word of it a vile, malicious, execrable falsehood! Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?" and I wrung my hands with agony.

The guests had risen from their seats in amaze; and I now made a spring towards the door, but was intercepted by Betterton, who held me fast.

"In the name of wonder," cried he, "how came you here?"

"No matter," cried I, struggling. "I know all. What have I ever done to you, you base, you cruel people?"

"Keep yourself cool, my little lady," said he.

"I won't, I can't!" cried I. "To use me so. You vile set; you horrid, horrid set!"

“ Go for another meal-bag,” said he, to the servant. “ Now, madam, you shall keep company with the bagged poet.”

“ Mercy, mercy !” cried I, “ What, will no one help me ?”

“ I will if I can !” exclaimed Higginson, with his head thrust out of the bag, like a snail ; and down he slid from his seat, and began rolling, and tumbling, and struggling on the floor, till he got upon his feet ; and then he came jumping towards me, now falling now rising, while his face and bald forehead were all over meal, his eyes blaring, and his mouth wide open. The company, wherever he moved, kept in a circle round him, and clapped their hands and shouted.

As I stood, with Betterton still holding me fast, he was suddenly flung *from* me by some one, and my hand

seized. I turned, and beheld.—Stuart. “Oh! bless you, bless you!” cried I, catching his arm, “for you have come to save me from destruction!”

He pressed my hand, and pointing to Betterton and Grundy, who stood thunderstruck, cried, “There are your men!”

A large posse of constables immediately rushed forward, and arrested them.

“Heydey! what is all this?” cried Betterton.

“’Tis for the beating you gave us when we were doing our duty,” said a man, and I recognised in the speaker one of the police-men who had arrested me about the barouche.

“This is government all over,” cried Betterton. “This is the minister. This is the law!”

“And let me tell you, Sir,” said

Stuart, "that nothing but my respect for the law deters me at this moment from chastising you as you deserve."

"What do you mean, sirrah?" cried Betterton.

"That you are a ruffian," said Stuart, "and the same cowardice which made you offer insult to a woman will make you bear it from a man. Now, Sir, I leave you to your fate." And we were quitting the room.

"What thing is that?" said Stuart, stopping short before the poet; who, with one arm and his face out of the bag, lay on his back, gasping and unable to stir.

"Cut it, cut it!" cried the poor man, in choaking accents.

"Higginson I protest!" exclaimed Stuart, as he snatched a knife from the table, and laid open the bag. Up rose the poet, resurrectionary from his hem-

pen coffin, and was beginning to clench his fist; but Stuart caught his arm, and hurried him and me out of the room.

Stuart, with great eagerness, now began asking me the particulars of all that had occurred at Betterton's; and his rage, as I related it, was extreme.

He then proceeded to tell me how he had discovered my being there.

After his departure from Lady Gwyn's, he set off for London, to prosecute his inquiries about my father; and spent some days in this way, to no purpose.

At length he returned to Lady Gwyn's, but was much shocked at learning from her that I had robbed her, and absconded; and had afterwards made an assault on her house, at the head of a set of Irishmen. By the description she gave, he judged that Jerry Sullivan was one of them; and not finding us at Monkton Castle, whither she di-

rected him, he posted back to London, in order to make inquiries at Jerry's house. Jerry, who had just returned, related the whole history of the castle; adding that I was to call upon him the moment I should arrive in Town. Stuart, therefore, waited some time; but as I did not appear, he began to suspect that Betterton had entrapped me; so he hastened to the coachmaker, and having explained to him that I was no swindler, and having paid him for the barouche, he told him (as he learned from Jerry) that Betterton was one of those who had assaulted the postillion and constables. The coachmaker, therefore, applied at the police-office; and a party was dispatched to apprehend Betterton. Stuart accompanied them, and thus gained admission (which he could not otherwise have done) into the house.

Higginson now told a lamentable

tale of the pranks that Betterton had played on him ; and amongst the rest, mentioned, that a servant had seduced him into the bag, by pretending to be his friend, and to smuggle him out of the house, in the character of meal.

He could gather, from several things said while the company were tormenting him, that Grundy had agreed to marry me ; and then, for a stipulated sum, to give Betterton opportunities of prosecuting his infamous designs. Thus both of them would escape the penalties of the law.

He likewise informed me, that the female guests were (to use his own words) ladies whom the male guests loved better than they ought to do ; and he then explained that the several rooms were furnished according to *the fashions of different countries* :

Grecian, Persian, Chinese, Italian ; and that mine was the Gothic chamber.

By this time, having reached the village, and stopped at an inn, where we meant to sleep, I desired a room, and bade Stuart a hasty good night.

Shocked, astonished, and ashamed at all that had passed, I threw myself on the bed, and unburdened my full heart in a bitter fit of crying. What ! thought I, not the Lady Cherubina De Willoughby after all ;—the tale fabricated by Betterton himself ;—the parchment that I had built the hope of my noble birth upon a mere lease of lives ;—could these things be ? Alas, there was no doubt of the fatal fact ! I had overheard the wretches boasting of it, and I had discovered their other impositions with my own eyes. To be thus upset in

my favourite speculation, in the business of my whole life; to have to begin all over again,—to have to search the wide world anew for my real name, my real family—or was Wilkinson indeed my father? Oh! if so, what a fall! and how horridly had I treated him! But I would not suffer myself to think of it. Then to be laughed at, despised, insulted by dissolute creatures calling themselves lords, and barons, and bravos, and heroes and heroines; and I declared to be no heroine! am I a heroine? I caught myself constantly repeating; and then I walked about wildly, then sat on the bed, then cast my body across it. Once I fell into a doze, and dreamed frightful dreams of monsters pursuing me swifter than the wind, while my bending limbs could only creep; and my voice, calling for help.

could not rise above a whisper. Then I woke, repeating, am I a heroine? I believe I was quite delirious; for notwithstanding all that I could do to prevent myself, I ran on rapidly, am I a heroine? am I? am I? am I? am I? till my brain reeled from its poise, and my hands were clenched with perturbation.

Thus passed the night, and towards morning I fell into a slumber.

Adieu.

LETTER XLV.

THIS morning my head felt rather better, and I appeared before Stuart with the sprightliest air imaginable; not that my mind was at ease;—far from it;—but that I could not endure to betray my mortification at having

proved such a dupe to buffoons and villains.

After breakfast, we began arranging our plans, and decided on proceeding to London; but did not determine on my place of residence there. I had my own projects, however.

As Higginson had assisted in rescuing me from the police, Stuart advised him to remain concealed somewhere, till after the trials of Betterton and Grundy; for though the poor man did not know that they were officers of justice whom he was assaulting (he having been in the turret when the fray commenced), yet this fact might be difficult to prove. Stuart, therefore, gave him some money, and I a letter; and he set off, in extreme tribulation, for the cottage of the poor woman; there to stay till the business should be decided.

Stuart and I then took our departure in a chaise. Unable to counterfeit gaiety long, I relapsed into languor; nor could my companion, by any effort, withdraw me from the contemplation of my late disgrace.

As we drew near Lady Gwyn's, he represented the propriety of my restoring her portrait, lest she should have recourse to an arrest. Disheartened by the past, and terrified for the future, I soon consented; and on our arriving at the avenue of the gentleman who had the portrait in his possession, Stuart, by my desire, went to the house without me. He was absent some time, but at last came back with it in his hand.

We then drove to Lady Gwyn's; and while I remained at the gate, he proceeded to execute the commission for me. Presently, however, I saw

him return accompanied by Lady Gwyn herself, who welcomed me with much kindness, begged I would forget the past, and prevailed on me to go into the house.

But it was only to suffer new mortifications. For now, at the instance of Stuart, she began to relate all the pranks which she had practised upon me while I was with her. She confessed that the crowning ceremony was merely to amuse her guests at my expence; and that my great mother was her own nephew! Think of that, Biddy! She said that Stuart, who had known her for some years, begged of her when I paid her my first visit to let me remain under her care, till his return from Town; and to humour my pretty caprices, as she called them. But he did not desire her to go so far with the jest; and

she had now just begun an apology for her conduct, when I rose, overwhelmed with shame and indignation, dropped a hasty courtesy, and fairly ran out of the house.

We proceeded some miles silent and uncomfortable. My heart was bursting, and my head felt as if billows were tossing through it.

At last I found myself in sight of the village where William, whom I had separated from his mistress a few weeks before, used to live. As this was a favourable opportunity for reconciling the lovers, I now made Stuart acquainted with the real origin of their quarrel, which I had concealed from him at the time it happened, lest he should mar it. He shook his head at the recital, and desired the driver to find out William's house, and stop there. That was

done, and in a few moments William made his appearance. He betrayed some agitation at seeing me, but saluted me with respect.

“ Well, William,” said I, sportively, “ how goes on your little quarrel with Mary ? Is it made up ? ”

“ No, Ma’am,” answered he, with a doleful look, “ and I fear never will.”

“ Yes, William,” cried I, with an assuring nod, “ I have the happiness to tell you that it will.”

“ Ah, Ma’am,” said he, “ I suppose you do not know what a sad calamity has fallen upon her since you were here. The poor creature has quite lost her senses.”

“ For shame ! ” cried I. “ What are you saying ? Lost her senses ! Well, I am sure it was not my fault, *however.* ”

“Your’s?” said he. “Oh, no, Ma’am. But she has never been in her reason since the day you left her.”

“Let us be gone,” whispered I to Stuart, as I sank back in the carriage. “Surely not,” said he. “’Tis at least your duty to repair the mischief you have done.”

“I should die before I could disclose it!” cried I.

“Then I will disclose it for you,” said he, leaping out of the chaise.

He went with William into the house, and I remained in such a state of mind, that I was several times on the point of quitting the chaise, and escaping I knew not whither; but any where from the horrid scene awaiting me. At last, Stuart appeared without William; and getting in, gave the driver directions to Mary’s cottage.

I wanted him to go without me:

but he declared that no effectual explanation could take place, unless from myself. He then said every thing to re-assure me. He told me that the poor girl was quite harmless, and had only temporary fits of wandering; and that, were the circumstance of the fatal letter once explained to her, and a reconciliation effected, she might eventually recover from her derangement; for William, it seems, had never divulged the contents of that letter, as it enjoined him not; but now Stuart brought it with him.

Having arrived near the cottage, we got out, and walked towards it. With a faltering step I crossed the threshold, and found the father in the parlour.

“ Dear Miss,” said he, “ welcome here once more. I suppose you have come to see poor Mary. Oh! ’tis a piteous, piteous sight. There she does

nothing but walk about, and sigh, and talk so wild; and nobody can tell the cause but that William; and he will not, for he says she forbade him."

"Come with me," said Stuart, "and I will tell you the cause."

He then led the miserable old man out of the room, and I remained at the window weeping.

But in a few minutes I heard a step; and on turning round, saw the father, running towards me with a face-haggard and ghastly; and crying out, "Cruel, cruel, cruel!" then grasping my shoulder, and lifting his tremulous hand to heaven: "Now," said he, "may the lightning of a just and good Providence——"

"Oh! pray," cried I, snatching down his hand—"oh! pray do not curse me! Do not curse a poor, silly, mad creature. It was a horrid affair;

very horrid ; but indeed, indeed, I meant no harm."

" Be calm, my good man," said Stuart, " and let us go to the garden where your daughter is walking. I am sure this young lady will not refuse to accompany us, and do her utmost in this critical moment."

" I will do any thing," cried I: " come along."

We now passed into the garden ; and I shuddered as I beheld the beautiful wreck at a distance. She had just stopt short in a stepping posture : her cloak had half fallen from her shoulders, and as her head hung down, her forefinger was lightly laid on her lip.

Panting to tell her all, I flew towards her, and caught her hand.

" Do you remember me, Mary?" said I softly.

She looked at me some moments

with a faint smile ; and at last she coloured.

“ Ah ! yes, I remember you,” said she. “ You were with us that very evening when I was so wretched. But I don’t care about him now ;—I don’t indeed ; and if I could only see him once more, I would tell him so. And then I would frown and turn from him ; and then he would follow, so sad and so pale : don’t you think he would ? And I am keeping his presents to give back to him, as he did mine ; and see how I have my hair parted on my forehead, just as he used to like it, ready the moment I see him to rumple it all about ; and then he will cry so. Don’t you think he will ? And then I will run, run, run away like the wind, and never see him again ; never, never again.”

“ My dear Mary,” said I, “ you shall

see him again, and be friends with him too. Your William is still faithful to you;—most faithful, and still loves you better than his life. I have seen him myself this moment.”

“ You have ?” cried she, reddening. “ Oh ! and what did he say ? But hush, not a word before my father and that man :” and she put one hand upon my mouth, and with the other round my waist, hurried me into a little arbour, where we sat down.

“ And now,” whispered she, stealing her arms about my neck, and looking earnestly into my eyes, while her whole frame shook, “ and now what did he say ?”


“ Mary,” said I, with a serious tone and aspect, “ you must collect your ideas, and listen attentively, for I have much to disclose. Do you re-

collect a letter that I got you to write for me when I was here last?"

"Letter—" muttered she. "Letter.—Yes, I believe I do. Oh! yes, I recollect it well; for it was a sad letter to your sweetheart, telling him that you had married another; and your sweetheart's name was William; and I thought, at the time, I would never write such a letter to my own William."

"And yet, Mary," said I, "your own William got that letter, by some mistake," (for I could not bear to tell the real fact) "that very evening; and seeing it in your hand-writing, and addressed to William, he thought it was from you to him; and so he gave you back your presents, and——"

"What is all that?" cried Mary, starting up. "Merciful powers! say all that over again!"



I made her sit down, and I shewed her the letter. As she read it, her colour changed, her lip quivered, her hand shook; and at the conclusion, she dropped it with a dreadful groan, and remained quite motionless.

“ Mary !” cried I, “ dear Mary, do not look so. Speak, Mary,” and I stirred her shoulder; but she still sat motionless with a fixed smile.

“ I shall, I will see her !” cried the voice of William at a distance; and the next instant he was seated breathless by her side.

“ Mary, my Mary !” cried he in the most touching accents.

At the well-known voice, she started, and turned towards him; but in a moment averted her face, and rose as pale as ashes. Then drawing some letters and baubles from her bosom, she threw them into his lap, and began

gently disarranging her hair, all the time looking sideways at him, with an air of pretty dignity.

"Come," said she, taking my hand, and leading me out of the arbour. "Well, was not that glorious? Now I shall die content."

"Yes," said I, "after having first killed your William. Have I not explained all about the letter; and how can you now treat him so cruelly?"

"The letter," said she. "Ay, true, the letter. Let me consider a moment. He thought it was mine, do you say?"

"He did indeed, Mary; and yet you will not be friends with him."

"But you see he won't follow me," said she. "He would have followed me once. Is he following me?"

"He cannot," answered I. "The poor young man is lying on the ground, and sobbing ready to break his heart."

Mary stopped.

“ Shall I call him ? ” said I.

“ Why now, ” said she, “ how can I prevent you ? ”

“ William ! ” cried I. “ Mary calls you. ”

William came flying towards her. At the sound of his steps she turned, stretched forth her hands, uttered a long and piercing cry ;—and they were locked in each other’s arms.

But the poor girl, quite overpowered by the sudden change, fell back insensible ; while William, kissing her, and weeping over her, bore her into the house, and laid her on a bed.

It was so long before she shewed any symptoms of animation, that we began to feel serious alarm ; and William ran to the village for an apothecary. By degrees she came to herself, and appeared somewhat more composed ; but

still wandering. At last, with her hand clasped in her lover's, she fell asleep; and then, as our presence could be no farther useful, we took leave of the venerable peasant; who, generous with recent hope, freely gave me his forgiveness and his blessing.

In my first transports of anguish at this scene, I disclosed to Stuart, what I had all day determined, but dreaded to tell—the situation of my father in the madhouse. At the horrid account, the good young man turned pale, but said not a word. I saw that I was undone, and I burst into tears.

“Be comforted, my dear girl,” said he, laying his hand on mine. “You have long been acting under the delusion of a dreadful dream, but this confession, and these tears, are, I trust, the prognostics of a total renunciation of error. So now let us hasten to your

father and release him. . He shall forgive you ; past follies shall be forgotten, past pleasures renewed ; you shall return to your real home, and Cherry Wilkinson shall again be the daughter of an honest squire."

" Mr. Stuart," said I, " as to my past follies, I know of none but two ;—, Mary's and my father's matters. And as to that father, he may not be what you suppose him. I fancy, Sir, there are such things as men who begin life with plain names, and end it with the most Italian in the world."

" Well?" cried Stuart.

" Well," said I, " that honest squire, as you call him, may yet come out to be a marquis."

Stuart groaned, and put his head out at the window.

We have reached London, and I take the opportunity to write while

Stuart is procuring from Grundy, who now lies in prison, such a statement as cannot fail to make the Doctor release my poor father without hesitation.

How shall I support this approaching interview ? I shall sink, I shall die under it. Indeed I wish to die ; and I feel an irresistible presentiment that my prayer will shortly be granted. All day long I have a horrid gloom hanging over me, besides a frequent wildness of ideas, and an unusual irritability. I have a chilliness, and yet a burning through my skin ; and I am unwilling even to move. If I could lock myself up in a room, with heaps of romances, and shut out all the world, I sometimes fancy that I should be happy. But no, my friend ; the grave will soon be my chamber, the worms my books ; and *if ever* I write again, I shall write from

the bed of death. I know it; I feel it. I shall be reconciled to my dear parent, acknowledge my follies, and die.

Adieu.

LETTER XLVI.

AGITATED beyond measure, I found myself at the madhouse, without well knowing how I had got there; and Stuart, after a long altercation with the Doctor, supported me to the room where my father was confined. He had to push me gently before him, and as I stopped breathless inside the door,

I saw by the dusky twilight a miserable object, shivering, and sitting on a bed. A few rags and a blanket were cast about it: the face was haggard, and the chin overgrown with a grisly beard. Yet, amidst all this disfigurement, I

could not mistake my father. I ran, prostrated myself at his feet, and clasping his knees, exclaimed, "Father, dear father!"

He started, and gazed at me for a moment; then flung me from him, and threw himself with his face downward on the bed. I cast my body across his, and endeavoured, with both my hands, to turn round his head, that I might embrace him; but he resisted every effort.

"Father!" cried I, clasping his neck, "will you break my heart? Will you drive me to distraction? Speak, father! Oh! one word, one little word, to save me from death!"

Still he lay mute and immovable.

"You are cold, father," said I. "You shiver. Shall I put something about you? shall I, father? Ah! I can be so kind and so tender when I love

one; and I love you dearly—Heaven knows I do.”

I stole my hand on one of his, and lay caressing his forehead, and murmuring words of fondness in his ear. But nothing could avail. He withdrew his hand by degrees, and buried his forehead deeper in the cloaths. And now half frantic, I began to wring my hands, and beat the pillow, and moan, and utter the most deplorable lamentations.

At last I thought I saw him a little convulsed, as if with smothered tears.

“ Ah,” cried I, “ you are relenting, you are weeping. Bless you for that. Dear, dear father, look up, and see with what joy a daughter can embrace you.”

“ My child, my child !” cried he, turning, and throwing himself upon my

bosom. "A heart of stone could not withstand this ! There, there, there, I forgive you all !"

Fast and fondly did we cling round each other, and sweet were the sighs that we breathed, and the tears that we shed.

But I suffered too much: the disorder which had some time been engendering in my frame now burst forth with alarming vehemence, and I was conveyed raving into a carriage. On our arrival at the hotel, they sent for a physician, who pronounced me in a violent fever of a nervous nature. For a fortnight I was not expected to recover; and I myself felt so convinced of my speedy dissolution, that I requested the presence of a clergyman. He came; and his conversations, by composing my mind, contributed in a great degree to my recovery. At my

request, he paid me daily visits. Our subject was religion,—not those theological controversies which excite so much irreligious feeling, and teach men to hate each other for the love of God; but those plain and simple truths which convince without confounding, and which avoid the bigotry that would worship error, because it is hereditary; and the fanaticism that would lay rash hands on the holy temple, because some of its smaller pillars appear unsound.

After several days of discussion on this important topic, he led me, by degrees, to give him an account of my late adventures; and as I related, he made comments.

Affected by his previous precepts, and by my own awful approach to eternity, which had suppressed in me the passions of ambition and

now became as desirous of conviction as I had heretofore been sophistical in support of my folly. To be predisposed is to be half converted ; and soon this exemplary pastor convinced my understanding of the impious and immoral tendency of my past life. He shewed me, that to the inordinate gratification of a particular caprice, I had sacrificed my duty towards my natural protectors, myself, and my God. That my ruling passion, though harmless in its nature, was injurious in its effects ; that it gave me a distaste for all sober occupations, perverted my judgment, and even threatened me with the deprivation of my reason. Religion itself, he said, if indulged ~~with~~ immoderate enthusiasm, at last ~~erates~~ erates into zealotry, and leaves the devotee too rapturous to be rational, and too virulent to be religious.

In a word, I have risen from my bed, an altered being ; and I now look back on my past delusions with abhorrence and disgust. Though the new principles of conduct which I have adopted are not yet rooted or methodized in my mind, and though the prejudices of a whole life are not (and indeed could not be) entirely eradicated in a few days ; still, as I am resolved on endeavouring to get rid of them, I trust that my reason will second my desire, and that the final consequence of my perceiving what is erroneous will be my learning what is correct.

Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

My health is now so far re-established, that I am no longer confined.

to my room. Stuart pays us constant visits, and his lively advice and witty reasoning, more complimentary than reproachful, and more insinuated than expressed, have tended to perfect my reformation.

He had put Don Quixote (a work which I never read before) into my hands; and on my returning it to him, with a confession of the benefit that I derived from it, the conversation naturally ran upon romances in general. He thus delivered his sentiments.

“I do not protest against the perusal of fictitious biography altogether; for many works of this kind may be read without injury, and some with profit. Novels such as the Vicar of Wakefield, The Fashionable Tales, and Cœlebs, which draw man as he is, imperfect, *instead* of man as he cannot be, *super-human*, are both instructive and en-

tertaining. Romances such as the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, the *Italian*, and the *Bravo of Venice*, which address themselves to the imagination alone, are often captivating, and seldom detrimental. But unfortunately so seductive are the latter class of composition, that one is apt to neglect more useful books for them; besides, when indulged in extreme, they tend to incapacitate us from encountering the turmoils of active life. They present us with incidents and characters which we can never meet in the world; and act upon the mind like intoxicating stimulants; first elevate, and at last enervate it. They teach us to revel in ideal scenes of transport and distraction; and harden our hearts against living misery, by making us so refined as to feel disgust at its unpoetical accompaniments.

“ In a country where morals are on the decline, novels always fall several degrees below the standard of national virtue: and the contrary holds in an opposite state of things. For as these works are an exaggerated picture of the times, they represent the prevalent opinions and manners with a gigantic pencil. Thus, since France became depraved, her novels have become dissolute; and since her social system arrived at its extreme of vicious refinement, they too have adopted that last master-stroke of refined vice, which wins the heart by the chastest aphorisms, and then corrupts it by the most alluring pictures of villainy. Take Rousseau for instance. What St. Preux is to Heloise, the book is to the reader. The lover so fascinates his mistress by his honourable sentiments, that she cannot resist his criminal advances.

The book infatuates the reader, till, in his admiration of its morality, he loses all recollection of its licentiousness ; for as virtue is more captivating, so vice is less disgusting when adorned with the Graces. It may be said that an author ought to portray vice in its seductive colours, for the purpose of unmasking its arts, and thus warning the young and inexperienced. But let it be recollected, that though familiarity with enchanting descriptions of vice may add to prudence, it must diminish virtue ; and that while it teaches the reason to resist, it entices the passions to yield. It was Rousseau's system, however, to paint the scenes of a brothel, in order to speak the cant of a monastery ; and thus has he undone many an imitating miss or wife, who began by listening to the language of love, that she might talk sentiment, and act virtue ; and

ended by falling a victim to it, because her heart had become entangled, her head bewildered, and her principles depraved.

“ Now, though we seldom see such publications in this country, yet there is a strain of well-meaning, but false morality prevalent in some. I will add (for why should I conceal it from you?) that your principles, which have hitherto been formed upon such books alone, appear, at times, a little perverted by their influence. It should now, therefore, be your object to counteract these bad effects by some more rational line of reading; and, as your ideas of real life are drawn from novels; and as even your manners and language are vitiated by them, I would recommend to you to mix in the world, to copy living instead of imaginary beings, and to study the customs of actual, not ideal society.”

With this opinion my father perfectly coincided: the system has already been begun, and I now pass my time in an alternation of instruction and amusement. Morality, history, languages, and music, occupy my mornings; and my evenings are sometimes enlivened by balls, operas, and familiar parties. As, therefore, we shall remain some time in town, my father has taken a house.

Stuart, my counsellor and my companion, sits by my side, directs my studies, re-assures my timidity, and corrects my mistakes. Indeed he has to correct them often; for I still retain some taints of my former follies and affectations. My postures are sometimes too picturesque, my phrases too flowery, and my sentiments too sublime.

This having been the day fixed for

the trials of Betterton and Grundy, the prisoners were brought to the bar, and the names of the prosecutors called. But these did not appear, and of consequence the culprits were discharged. It is supposed that Betterton, the great declaimer against bribery and corruption, had tampered with the postillion and the police, and thus escaped the fate which awaited him.

Adieu.

LETTER XLVIII.

IN ridding ourselves of a particular fault, we are apt, at first, to run too far into its opposite virtue. I had poured forth my tender feelings to you with such sentimental absurdity, when I fancied myself enamoured of one man, that as soon as I began to reform, and

found myself actually attached to another, I determined on concealing my fondness from you, with the most scrupulous discretion of pen. Perhaps, therefore, I should beg your forgiveness for never having hinted to you before, what I am now about disclosing to you without any reserve.

Even at the very time when I thought I was bound in duty to be devotedly in love with the hateful Grundy, I felt an unconscious partiality for Stuart. But after my reformation, that partiality became too decisive to be misinterpreted or concealed. And indeed he was so constantly with me, and so kind a comforter and friend; and then so fascinating are his manners, and so good his disposition; for I am certain there is no such young man at all—you see in his eyes what he is; you see instantly that his heart is all

gentleness and benevolence, and yet he has a fire in them, a fire that would delight you : and I could tell you a thousand anecdotes of him that would astonish you.— But what have I done with my sentence? Go back, good pen, and restore it to the grammar it deserves: or rather leave it as it is—a cripple for life, and hasten to the happy catastrophe.

With a secret transport which I cannot describe, I began of late to perceive that Stuart had become more assiduous than usual in his visits to me ; that his manners betrayed more tenderness, and his language more regard. These attentions increased daily ; nor did he omit opportunities of hinting his passion, in terms which I could not mistake.

This morning, however, put the matter beyond a doubt. I was alone

when he came to pay his accustomed visit. At first he made some faint attempts at conversing upon indifferent topics ; but all the time I could perceive an uneasiness and perturbation in his manner that surprised me.

“ Pray,” said I, at length, “ what makes you so dull and absent to-day ?”

“ You,” replied he, with a smile.

“ And what have I done ?” said I.

“ ’Tis not what you have done,” answered he ; “ but what you will do.”

“ And what is that ?” said I.

He changed to a nearer chair, and looked at me with much agitation. I guessed what was coming ; I had expected it some time ; but now, when the moment arrived, I felt my heart fail ; so I suddenly moved towards the door, saying that I was sure I heard

my father call. Stuart sprang after me, and led me back by the hand.

“When I tell you,” said he, “that on the possession of this hand depends my happiness, may I flatter myself with the hope that my happiness would not contribute to your misery?”

“As I am no longer a heroine,” said I, smiling, “I do not intend to get up a scene. You happen to have my hand now; and I am afraid—very much afraid, that——”

“That what?” cried he, holding it faster.

“That it is not worth withdrawing,” said I.

But in this effort to shun a romance eclairsissement, I had, I feared, run into the contrary extreme, and betrayed an undue boldness; so I got sentimental in good earnest, and burst into tears. Stuart led me to my chair, and

soon dissipated my uneasiness by his eloquent expressions of gratitude and delight, and his glowing pictures of our future happiness. I told him, that I wondered how he, who knew my failings so well, would venture to stake his happiness upon me.

“It was by my knowledge of your failings,” said he, “that I discovered your perfections. Those embarrassments of your life which I witnessed have enabled me to judge of you more justly in a few months, than had I been acquainted with you whole years, in the common routine of intercourse. They have shewn me, that if you had weakness enough to court danger, you had firmness enough to withstand temptation; and that while the faulty part of your character was factitious and superinduced, all the pure and generous impulses came

Our conversation was interrupted by the sudden entrance of my father; and on his hearing from Stuart (who, it seems had made him a confidant) the favourable issue of our interview, the good old man hugged both of us in his arms.

To detain you no longer, a week hence is fixed for our wedding.

I have just received a letter from Mary, mentioning her perfect restoration to health, and her union with William. I shall offer no observation on your late marriage with the butler; but I must remark, that your reason for having never given me advice, during my follies—namely, because my father had deprived you of the right to do so, evinced more anger towards him than love for me. However, I shall always be happy to hear of your welfare.

Adieu.

LETTER XLIX.

I HAVE just time to tell you, before I leave town, that my fate was sealed this morning, and that I am a wife.

On my return to the house, after the ceremony, I found an epithalamium, addressed to me by poor Higginson; but it was more filled with hints at his own misery than congratulations upon my happiness.

Honest Jerry Sullivan met me at the door, and shook my hand, and danced round me in a fury of outrageous joy.

"Well," cried he, "often and often I thought your freaks would get you hanged; but may I be hanged if ever I thought they would get you married!"

“ You see,” said I to Stuart, “ after all your pains to prevent me from imitating romances, you have made me terminate my adventures like a true romance—in a wedding. Pray with what moral will you now conclude the book?”

“ I will say,” returned he, “ that virtue—no. That calamity—no. That fortitude and resignation——oh, no! I will say, then, that Tommy Horner was a bad boy, and would not get plumcake; and that King Pepin was a good boy, and rode in a golden coach.”

Adieu.

THE END.

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